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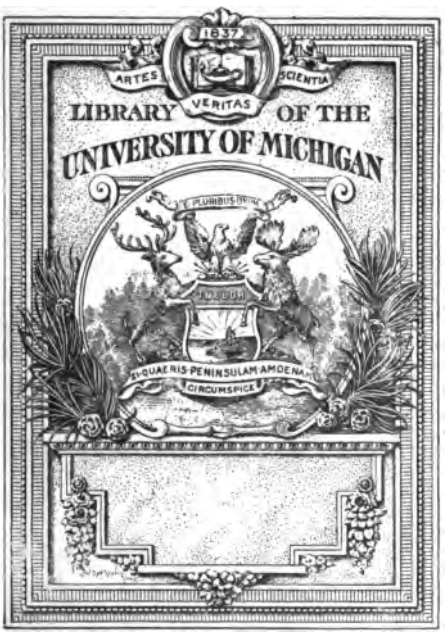
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THE
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THE WOLF'S LONG HOWL

GEORGE HENRY HARRISON, though without living near kinfolk, had never considered himself alone in the world. Up to the time when he became thirty years of age he had always thought himself, when he thought of the matter at all, as fortunate in the extent of his friendships. He was acquainted with a great many people; he had a recognized social standing, was somewhat cleverer than the average man, and his instincts, while refined by education and experience, were decidedly gregarious and toward hearty companionship. He should have been a happy man, and had been one, in fact, up to the time when this trustworthy account begins; but just now, despite his natural buoyancy of spirit, he did not count himself among the blessed.

George Henry wanted to be at peace with all the world, and now there were obstacles in the way. He did not delight in aggressiveness, yet certain people were aggressive. In his club—which he felt he must soon abandon—he received from all save a minority of the members a hearty reception, and in his club he rather enjoyed himself for the

hour, forgetting that conditions were different outside. On the streets he met men who bowed to him somewhat stiffly, and met others who recognized him plainly enough, but who did not bow. The postman brought daily a bunch of letters, addressed in various forms of stern commercial handwriting to George Henry Harrison, but these often lay unopened and neglected on his desk.

To tell the plain and unpleasant truth, George Henry Harrison had just become a poor man, a desperately poor man, and already realized that it was worse for a young man than an old one to rank among those who have "seen better days." Even after his money had disappeared in what had promised to be a good investment, he had for a time maintained his place, because, unfortunately for all concerned, he had been enabled to get credit; but there is an end to that sort of thing, and now, with his credit gone after his money, he felt his particular world slipping from him. He felt a change in himself, a certain on-creeping paralysis of his social backbone. When practicable he avoided certain of his old friends, for he could see too plainly written on their faces the fear that he was about to request a trifling loan, though already his sense of honor, when he considered his prospects, had forced him to cease asking favors of the sort. There were faces which he had loved well which he could not bear to see with the look of mingled commiseration and annoyance he inspired.

And so it came that at this time George Henry Harrison was acquainted chiefly with grief—with the wolf at his door. His mail, once blossoming with messages of good-will and friendliness, became a desert of duns.

"Why is it," George Henry would occasionally ask himself—there was no one else for him to talk to—"why is it that when a man is sure of his meals every day he has endless invitations to dine out, but that when those events are matters of uncertainty he gets not a bidding to the feast?" This question, not a new one, baffling in its mystery and chilling to the marrow, George Henry classed with another he had heard somewhere: "Who is more happy: the hungry man who can get nothing to eat, or the rich man with an overladen table who can eat nothing?" The two problems ran together in his mind, like a couple of hounds in leash, during many a long night when he could not shut out from his ears the howling of the wolf. He often wondered, jeering the while at his own grotesque fancy, how his neighbors could sleep with those mournful yet sinister howlings burdening the air, but he became convinced at last that no one heard the melancholy solo but himself.

" 'The wolf's long howl on Oonalaska's shore' is not in it with that of mine," said George Henry —for since his coat had become threadbare his language had deteriorated, and he too frequently used slang—"but I'm thankful that I alone hear

my own. How different the case from what it is when one's dog barks o' nights! Then the owner is the only one who sleeps within a radius of blocks. The beasts are decidedly unlike."

Not suddenly had come all this tribulation to the man, though the final disappearance of all he was worth, save some valueless remnants, had been preceded by two or three heavy losses. Optimistic in his ventures, he was not naturally a fool. Ill fortune had come to him without apparent provocation, as it comes to many another man of intelligence, and had followed him persistently and ruthlessly when others less deserving were prospering all about him. It was not astonishing that he had become a trifle misanthropic. He found it difficult to recover from the daze of the moment when he first realized his situation.

The comprehension of where he stood first came to George Henry when he had a note to meet, a note for a sum that would not in the past have seemed large to him, but one at that time assuming dimensions of importance. He thought when he had given the note that he could meet it handily; he had twice succeeded in renewing it, and now had come to the time when he must raise a certain sum or be counted among the wreckage. He had been hopeful, but found himself on the day of payment without money and without resources. How many thousands of men who have engaged in our tigerish dollar struggle have felt the sinking at

heart which came to him then! But he was a man, and he went to work. Talk about climbing the Alps or charging a battery! The man who has hurried about all day with reputation to be sustained, even at the sacrifice of pride, has suffered more, dared more and knows more of life's terrors than any reckless mountain-climber or any veteran soldier in existence. George Henry failed at last. He could not meet his bills.

Reason to himself as he might, the man was unable to endure his new condition placidly. He tried to be philosophical. He would stalk about his room humming from "The Mahogany Tree":

> "Care, like a dun, stands at the gate.
> Let the dog wait!"

and seek to get himself into the spirit of the words, but his efforts in such direction met with less than moderate success. "The dog does wait," he would mutter. "He's there all the time. Besides, he isn't a dog: he's a wolf. What did Thackeray know about wolves!" And so George Henry brooded, and was, in consequence, not quite as fit for the fray as he had been in the past.

To make matters worse, there was a woman in the case; not that women always make matters worse when a man is in trouble, but in this instance the fact that a certain one existed really caused the circumstances to be more trying. There was a charming young woman in whom George Henry had taken more than a casual interest. There was

reason to suppose that the interest was not all his, either, but there had been no definite engagement. At the time when financial disaster came to the man, there had grown up between him and Sylvia Hartley that sort of understanding which cannot be described, but which is recognized clearly enough, and which is to the effect that flowers bring fruit. Now he felt glad, for her sake, that only the flower season had been reached. They were yet unpledged. Since he could not support a wife, he must give up his love. That was a matter of honor.

The woman was quite worthy of a man's love. She was clever and good. She had dark hair and a wonderfully white skin, and dark, bright eyes, and when he explained to her that he was a wreck financially, and said that in consequence he didn't feel justified in demanding so much of her attention, she exhibited in a gentle way a warmth of temperament which endeared her to him more than ever, while she argued with him and tried to laugh him out of his fears. He was tempted sorely, but he loved her in a sufficiently unselfish way to resist. He even sought to conceal his depth of feeling under a disguise of lightness. He admitted that in his present frame of mind he ought to be with her as much as possible, as then, if ever, he stood in need of a sure antidote for the blues, and with a half-hearted jest he closed the conversation, and after that call merely kept away from her. It was hard for him, and as hard for her; but if he had

honor, she had pride. So they drifted apart, each suffering.

Who shall describe with a just portrayal of its agony the inner life of the reasonably strong man who feels that he is somehow going down hill in the world, who becomes convinced that he is a failure, and who struggles almost hopelessly? George Henry went down hill, though setting his heels as deeply as he could. His later plans failed, and there came a time when his strait was sore indeed—the time when he had not even the money with which to meet the current expenses of a modest life. To one vulgar or dishonest this is bad; to one cultivated and honorable it is far worse. George Henry chanced to come under the latter classification, and so it was that to him poverty assumed a phase especially acute, and affected him both physically and mentally.

His first experience was bitter. He had never been an extravagant man, but he liked to be well dressed, and had remained so for a time after his business plans had failed. He was not a gormand, but he had continued to live well. Now, with almost nothing left to live upon, he must go shabby, and cease to tickle his too fastidious palate. He must buy nothing new to wear, and must live at the cheapest of the restaurants. He felt a sort of Spartan satisfaction when this resolve had been fairly reached, but no enthusiasm. It required great resolution on his part when, for the first time,

he entered a restaurant the sign in front of which bore the more or less alluring legend, "Meals fifteen cents."

George Henry loved cleanliness, and the round table at which he found a seat bore a cloth dappled in various ways. His sense of smell was delicate, and here came to him from the kitchen, separated from the dining-room by only a thin partition, a combination of odors, partly vegetable, partly flesh and fish, which gave him a new sensation. A faintness came upon him, and he envied those eating at other tables. They had no qualms; upon their faces was the hue of health, and they were eating as heartily as the creatures of the field or forest do, and with as little prejudice against surroundings. George Henry tried to philosophize again and to be like these people, but he failed. He noted before him on the table a jar of that abject stuff called carelessly either "French" or "German" mustard, stale and crusted, and remembered that once at a dinner he had declared that the best test of a gentleman, of one who knew how to live, was to learn whether he used pure, wholesome English mustard or one of these mixed abominations. His ears felt pounding into them a whirlwind of street talk larded with slang. He ordered sparingly. He did not like it when the waiter, with a yell, translated his modest order of fried eggs and coffee into "Fried, turned," and "Draw one," and he liked it less when the food came and

he found the eggs limed and the coffee muddy. He ate little, and left the place depressed. "I can't stand this," he muttered, "that's as sure as God made little apples."

His own half-breathed utterance of this expression startled the man. The simile he had used was a repetition of what he had just heard in a conversation between men at an adjoining table in the restaurant. He had often heard the expression before, but had certainly never utilized it personally. "The food must be affecting me already," he said bitterly, and then wandered off unconsciously into an analysis of the metaphor. It puzzled him. He could not understand why the production of little apples by the Deity had seemed to the person who at some time in the past had first used this expression as an illustration of a circumstance more assured than the production of big apples by the same power, or of the evolution of potatoes or any other fruit or vegetable, big or little. His foolish fancies in this direction gave him the mental relief he needed. When he awoke to himself again the restaurant was a memory, and he, having recovered something of his tone, resolved to do what could be done that day to better his fortunes.

Then came work—hard and exceedingly fruitless work—in looking for something to do. Then Nature began paying attention to George Henry Harrison personally, in a manner which, however

flattering in a general way, did not impress him pleasantly. His breakfast had been a failure, and now he was as hungry as the leaner of the two bears of Palestine which tore forty-two children who made faces at Elisha. He thought first of a free-lunch saloon, but he had an objection to using the fork just laid down by another man. He became less squeamish later. He was resolved to feast, and that the banquet should be great. He entered a popular down-town place and squandered twenty-five cents on a single meal. The restaurant was scrupulously clean, the steak was good, the potatoes were mealy, the coffee wasn't bad, and there were hot biscuits and butter. How the man ate! The difference between fifteen and twenty-five cents is vast when purchasing a meal in a great city. George Henry was reasonably content when he rose from the table. He decided that his self-imposed task was at least endurable. He had counted on every contingency. Instinctively, after paying for his food, he strolled toward the cigar-stand. Half-way there he checked himself, appalled. Cigars had not been included in the estimate of his daily needs. Cigars he recognized as a luxury. He left the place, determined but physically unhappy. The real test was to come.

The smoking habit affects different men in different ways. To some tobacco is a stimulant, to others a narcotic. The first class can abandon tobacco more easily than can the second. The man

to whom tobacco is a stimulant becomes sleepy and dull when he ceases its use, and days ensue before he brightens up on a normal plane. To the one who finds it a narcotic, the abandonment of tobacco means inviting the height of all nervousness. To George Henry tobacco had been a narcotic, and now his nerves were set on edge. He had pluck, though, and irritable and suffering, endured as well as he could. At length came, as will come eventually in the case of every healthy man persisting in self-denial, surcease of much sorrow over tobacco, but in the interval George Henry had a residence in purgatory, rent free.

And so—these incidents are but illustrative—the man forced himself into a more or less philosophical acceptance of the new life to which necessity had driven him. If he did not learn to like it, he at least learned to accept its deprivations without a constant grimace.

But more than mere physical self-denial is demanded of the man on the down grade. The plans of his intellect a failure, he turns finally to the selling of the labor of his body. This selling of labor may seem an easy thing, but it is not so to the man with neither training nor skill in manual labor of any sort. George Henry soon learned this lesson, and his heart sank within him. He had reached the end of things. He had tried to borrow what he needed, and failed. His economies had but extended his lease of tolerable life.

Shabby and hungry, he sought a "job" at anything, avoiding all acquaintances, for his pride would not allow him to make this sort of an appeal to them. Daily he looked among strangers for work. He found none. It was a time of business and industrial depression, and laborers were idle by thousands. He envied the men working on the streets relaying the pavements. They had at least a pittance, and something to do to distract their minds.

Weeks and months went by. George Henry now lived and slept in his little office, the rent of which he had paid some months in advance before the storms of poverty began to beat upon him. Here, when not making spasmodic excursions in search of work, he dreamed and brooded. He wondered why men came into the feverish, uncertain life of great cities, anyhow. He thought of the peace of the country, where he was born; of the hollyhocks and humming-birds, of the brightness and freedom from care which was the lot of human beings there. They had few luxuries or keen enjoyments, but as a reward for labor—the labor always at hand—they had at least a certainty of food and shelter. There came upon him a great craving to get into the world of nature and out of all that was cankering about him, but with the longing came also the remembrance that even in the blessed home of his youth there was no place now for him.

One day, after what seemed ages of this kind of life, a wild fancy took hold of George Henry's mind. Out of the wreckage of all his unprofitable investments one thing remained to him. He was still a landed proprietor, and he laughed somewhat bitterly at the thought. He was the owner of a large tract of gaunt poplar forest, sixteen hundred acres, in a desolate region of Michigan, his possessions stretching along the shores of the lake. An uncle had bought the land for fifty cents an acre, and had turned it over to George Henry in settlement of a loan made in his nephew's more prosperous days. George Henry had paid the insignificant taxes regularly, and as his troubles thickened had tried to sell the vaguely valued property at any price, but no one wanted it. This land, while it would not bring him a meal, was his own at least, and he reasoned that if he could get to it and build a little cabin upon it, he could live after a fashion.

The queer thought somehow inspirited him. He would make a desperate effort. He would get a barrel of pork and a barrel or two of flour and some potatoes, a gun and an axe; he knew a lake captain, an old friend, who would readily take him on his schooner on its next trip and land him on his possessions. But the pork and the flour and the other necessaries would cost money; how was he to get it? The difficulty did not discourage him. The plan gave him something definite to do.

He resolved to swallow all pride, and make a last appeal for a loan from some of those he dreaded to meet again. Surely he could raise among his friends the small sum he needed, and then he would go into the woods. Maybe his head and heart would clear there, and he would some day return to the world like the conventional giant refreshed with new wine.

It is astonishing how a fixed resolution, however grotesque, helps a man. The very fact that in his own mind the die was cast brought a new recklessness to George Henry. He could look at things objectively again. He slept well for the first time in many weeks.

The next morning, when George Henry awoke, he had abated not one jot of his resolve nor of his increased courage. The sun seemed brighter than it had been the day before, and the air had more oxygen to the cubic foot. He looked at the heap of unopened letters on his desk—letters he had lacked, for weeks, the moral courage to open—and laughed at his fear of duns. Let the wolf howl! He would interest himself in the music. He would be a hero of heroes, and unflinchingly open his letters, each one a horror in itself to his imagination; but with all his newly found courage, it required still an effort for George Henry to approach his desk.

Alone, with set teeth and drooping eyes, George Henry began his task. It was the old, old story.

Bills of long standing, threats of suits, letters from collecting agencies, red papers, blue, cream and straw-colored—how he hated them all! Suddenly he came upon a new letter, a square, thick, well addressed letter of unmistakable respectability.

"Can it be an invitation?" said George Henry, his heart beating. He opened the sturdy envelope and read the words it had enclosed. Then he leaned back, very still, in his chair, with his eyes shut. His heart bled over what he had suffered. "Had" suffered—yes, that was right, for it was all a thing of the past. The letter made it clear that he was comparatively a rich man. That was all.

It was the despised—but not altogether despised, since he had thought of making it his home—poplar land in Michigan. The poplar supply is limited, and paper-mills have capacious maws. Prices of raw material had gone up, and the poplar hunters had found George Henry's land the most valuable to them in the region. A syndicate offered him one hundred dollars an acre for the tract.

Joy failed to kill George Henry Harrison. It stunned him somewhat, but he showed wonderful recuperative powers. As he ate a free-lunch after a five-cent expenditure that morning, there was something in his air which would have prevented the most obtuse barkeeper in the world from commenting upon the quantity consumed. He was not particularly depressed because his hat was old and his coat gray at the seams and his shoes

cracked. His demeanor when he called upon an attorney, a former friend, was quite that of an American gentleman perfectly at his ease.

Within a few days George Henry Harrison had deposited to his credit in bank the sum of one hundred and sixty thousand dollars, minus the slight cost of certain immediate personal requirements. Then one morning he stalked over to his little office, now clean and natty. He leaned back in his chair again and devoted himself to thinking, the persons on whom his mind dwelt being his creditors.

The proper title for the brief account which follows should be The Feast of the Paying of Bills. Here was a man who had suffered, here was a man who had come to doubt himself, and who had now become suddenly and arrogantly independent. His creditors, he knew, were hopeless. That he had so few lawsuits to meet was only because those to whom he owed money had reasoned that the cost of collection would more than offset the sum gained in the end from this man, who had, they thought, no real property behind him. Their attitude had become contemptuous. Now he stood forth defiant and jaunty.

There is a time in a man's failing fortunes when he borrows and gives his note blithely. He is certain that he can repay it. He runs up bills as cheerfully, sure that they will easily be met at the end of thirty days. With George Henry this now

long past period had left its souvenirs, and the torture they had inflicted upon him has been partly told.

Now came the sweet and glorious hour of his relief.

It was a wonderful sensation to him. He marveled that he had so respectfully thought of the creditors who had dogged him. They were people, he now said, of whom he should not have thought at all. He became a magnificently objective reasoner. But there was work to be done.

George Henry decided that, since there were certain people to whom he must write, each letter being accompanied by a check for a certain sum of money, each letter should appropriately indicate to its recipient the calm and final opinion of the writer regarding the general character and reputation of the person or firm addressed. The human nature of George Henry asserted itself very strongly just here. He set forth paper and ink, took up his pen, and poised his mind for a feast of reason and flow of soul which should be after the desire of his innermost heart.

First, George Henry carefully arranged in the order of their date of incurring a list of all his debts, great and small—not that he intended to pay them in that order, but where a creditor had waited long he decided that his delay in paying should be regarded as in some degree extenuating and excusing the fierceness of the assaults made

upon a luckless debtor. The creditors chanced to have had no choice in the matter, but that did not count. Age hallowed a debt to a certain slight extent.

This arrangement made, George Henry took up his list of creditors, one hundred and twenty in all, and made a study of them, as to character, habits and customs. He knew them very well indeed. In their intercourse with him, each, he decided, had laid his soul bare, and each should be treated according to the revelations so made. There was one man who had loaned him quite a large sum, and this was the oldest debt of all, incurred when George Henry first saw the faint signs of approaching calamity, but understood them not. This man, a friend, recognizing the nature of George Henry's struggle, had never sought payment—had, in fact, when the debtor had gone to him, apologetically and explaining, objected to the intrusion and objurgated the caller in violent language of the lovingly profane sort. He would have no talk of payment, as things stood. This claim, not only the oldest but the least annoying, should, George Henry decided, have the honor of being "No. 1"—that is, it should be paid first of all. So the list was extended, a careful analysis being made of the mental and moral qualities of each creditor as exposed in his monetary relations with George Henry Harrison. There were some who had been generous and thoughtful, some who had been

vicious and insulting; and in his examination George Henry made the discovery that those who had probably least needed the money due them had been by no means the most considerate. It seemed almost as if the reverse rule had obtained. There was one man in particular, who had practically forced a small loan upon him when George Henry was still thought to be well-to-do, who had developed an ingenuity and insolence in dunning which gave him easy altitude for meanness and harshness among the lot. He went down as "No. 120," the last on the list.

There were others. There were the petty tradesmen who in former years had prospered through George Henry's patronage, whose large bills had been paid with unquestioning promptness until came the slip of his cog in the money-distributing machine. They had not hesitated a moment. As the peccaries of Mexico and Central America pursue blindly their prey, so these small yelpers, Tray, Blanche and Sweetheart, of the trade world, had bitten at his heels persistently from the beginning of his weakness up to the present moment. Toward these he had no malice. He counted them but as he had counted his hunting dogs in better days. They were narrow, but they were reckoned as men; they transacted business and married the females of their kind, and bred children—prodigally—and after all, against them he had no particular grievance. They were as they were made and must be.

He gathered a bunch of their bills together, and decided that they should be classed together, not quite at the end of the list.

The grade of each individual creditor fixed, the list was carefully divided into five parts, twenty in each, of which twenty should receive their letters and checks one day, twenty the next, and so on. Then the literature of the occasion began.

The thoughtful debtor who has had somewhat continuous relations with a creditor can, supposing he has even a moderate gift, write a very neat, compact and thought-compelling little letter to that creditor when he finally settles with him, if, as in the case of George Henry, the debtor will have balance enough left after all settlements to make him easy and independent. George Henry felt the strength of this proposition as he wrote. In casual, easily written conversation with his meanest creditors he rather excelled himself. Of course he sent abundant interest to everybody, though apologizing to the gentlemen among the lot for doing so, but telling them frankly that it would relieve him if they accepted the proper sum for the use of the money, saying nothing about it; while of the mean ones he demanded prompt receipts in full. That was the general tenor of the notes, but there were certain moderate extravagances in either direction, if there be such a thing as a "moderate extravagance."

To the worst, the most irritating of his cred-

itors, George Henry indicted his masterpiece. He admitted his obligation, he expressed his satisfaction at paying an interest which made it a good investment for the creditor, and then he entered into a little disquisition as to the creditor's manner and scale of thought and existence, followed by certain mild suggestions as to improvements which might be made in the character under observation. He pledged himself to return at any time the favor extended him, and promised also never to mention it after it had been extended. He apologized for the lack of further and more adequate treatment of the subject, expressing his conviction that the more delicate shades of meaning which might be employed after a more extended study would not be comprehended by the person addressed.

George Henry—it is with regret that it is admitted—had a wild hope that this creditor would become enraged to the point of making a personal assault on him from this simple summing up of affairs, because he had an imbedded desire to lick, or anyway try to lick, this particular person, could he be provoked into an encounter. It is as well to say here that his dream was never gratified. The nagging man is never a fighting man.

And so the Feast of the Paying of Bills went on to its conclusion. It was a season of intense enjoyment for George Henry. When it was ended, having money, having also a notable gift

as a shot, he fled to the northern woods, where grouse and deer fell plentifully before him, and then after a month he returned to enjoy life at ease.

It was upon his return home that George Henry Harrison, well-to-do and content, learned something which for a time made him think this probably the hollowest of all the worlds which swing around the sun. He came back, vigorous and hopeful of spirit, with the strength of the woods and of nature in him, and with open heart and hand ready to greet his fellow-beings, glad to be one with them. The thing which smote him was odd. It was that he found himself a stranger among the fellow-beings he had come to meet. He found himself still a Selkirk of the world of trade and traffic and transfer of thought and well-wishing and strong-doing and of all social life. He was like a strange bird, like an albatross blown into unaccustomed seas, alighting upon an island where albatrosses were unknown.

He found his office as bright and attractive as urgently and sternly directed servitude could make it. There were no letters upon his desk, however, the desk so overburdened in the past. The desk spoke of loneliness. The new carpet, without a worn white strip leading from the doorway, said loneliness. All was loneliness. He could not understand it.

There was the abomination of clean and cold

desolation in and all about his belongings. He sat down in the easy-chair before his desk, and was far, very far, from happy. He leaned back—the chair worked beautifully upon its well-oiled springs—and wondered. He shut his eyes, and tried to place himself in his position of a month before, and failed. Why had there been no callers? His own branch of business was in a laggard way, but of that he made no account. He thought of Oonalaska, and decided that there were worse places in the world than on that shore, even with the drawback of the howlings. He seemed to be in space.

To sum up all in an explanatory way, George Henry, having largely lost his grip upon the world, had voluntarily, being too sensitive, severed all connections save those he had to maintain with that portion of the community interested in the paying of his bills. Now, since he had met all material obligations, he thought the world would come to him again unsought. It did not come.

Every one seemed to have gone away with the wolf. George Henry began trying to determine what it was that was wrong. The letter-carrier, a fine fellow, who had called upon him daily in the past, now never crossed his threshold. Even book agents and peddlers avoided the place, from long experience of rebuff. The bill-collectors came no more, of course; and as George Henry looked back over the past months of humiliation and agony he suddenly realized that to these same collectors he

had been solely indebted toward the last of his time of trial for what human companionship had come to him. His friends, how easily they had given him up! He thought of poor old Rip Van Winkle's plaint, "How soon we are forgotten when we are gone!" and sarcastically amended it to "How soon we are forgotten when we are here!" A few invitations declined, the ordinary social calls left for some other time, and he was apparently forgotten. He could not much blame himself that he had voluntarily severed the ties. A man cannot dine in comfort with comfortable friends when his heart is sore over his general inconsequence in the real world. Play is not play when zest is not given to it by work and duties. Even his social evenings with old and true friends he had given up early in the struggle. He could not overcome the bitterness of his lot sufficiently to sit easily among those he most cared for. It is not difficult sometimes to drop out of life while yet alive. Yet George Henry realized that possibly he had been an extended error—had been too sensitive. He thought of his neglect of friends and his generally stupid performances while under the spell of the wolf, but he thought also of the excuse he had, and conscience was half appeased.

So he was alone, the same old Selkirk or Robinson Crusoe, without a man Friday, without even a parrot and goats; alone in his once familiar hotel and his office, in a city where he was distinctly of

the native sort, where he had seen, it seemed to him, every one of the great "sky-scraping" buildings rise from foundation-stone to turret, where he should be one whose passage along the street would be a series of greetings. He yearned for companionship. His pulse quickened when he met one of his lately persecuting bill-collectors on the street and received from him a friendly recognition of his bow and smile. He became affable with elevator-men and policemen. But he was lonely, very lonely.

The days drifted into long weeks, when one day the mail-carrier, once so regular in his calls, now almost a stranger, appeared and cast upon George Henry's desk a letter returned uncalled for. The recipient examined it with interest. It did not require much to excite his interest now.

The returned letter was one which he had sent enclosing a check to a Dr. Hartley, to whom he had become indebted for professional services at one time. He had never received a bill, but had sent the check at a venture. Its return, with the post-office comment, "Moved, left no address," startled him. Dr. Hartley was Her father. George Henry pondered. Was it a dream or reality, that a few months ago, while he was almost submerged in his sea of difficulties, he had read or heard of Dr. Hartley's death? He had known the doctor but slightly, well as he had known his daughter Sylvia, of the dark eyes, but it seemed impossible that in

any state of mind such a thing as Dr. Hartley's reported death should have made no impression upon him. He was aroused now, almost for the first time, and was really himself again. The benumbing influence of his face-to-face fight with poverty and inactivity disappeared. Sylvia lived again, fresh, vital and strong in her hold upon him. He was renewed by the purpose in life which he had allowed to lapse in his desperate days of defeat. He would find Sylvia. She might be in sorrow, in trouble; he could not wait, but leaped out of his office and ran down the long stairways, too hurried and restless to wait for the lagging elevator of the great building where he had suffered so much.

The search was longer and more difficult than the seeker had anticipated. It required but little effort to learn that Dr. Hartley had been dead for months, and that his family had gone away from the roomy house where their home had been for many years. To learn more was for a time impossible. He had known little of the family kinship and connections, and it seemed as if an adverse fate pursued his attempts to find the hidden links which bind together the people of a great city. But George Henry persisted, and his heart grew warm within him. He hummed an old tune as he walked quickly along the crowded streets, smiling to himself when he found himself singing under his breath the old, old song:

> Who is Silvia? What is she
> That all swains commend her?

In another quarter of the city, far removed from her former home and neighbors, George Henry at last found Sylvia, her mother and a younger brother, living quietly with the mother's widowed sister. During his search for her the image of the woman he had once hoped might be his wife had grown larger and dearer in his mind and heart. He wondered how he had ever given her up, and how he had lived through so much suffering, and then through relief from suffering, without the past and present joy of his life. He wondered if he should find her changed. He need have had no fears. He found, when at last he met her, that she had not changed, unless, it may be, to have become even more lovable in his eyes. In the moment when he first saw her now he knew he had found the world again, that he was no longer a stranger in it, that he was living in it and a part of it. A sweetheart has been a tonic since long before knights wore the gloves of ladies on their crests. Within a week, through Sylvia, he had almost forgotten that one can get lost, even as a lost child, in this great, grinding world of ours, and within a year he and Mrs. George Henry Harrison were "at home" to their friends.

After a time, when George Henry Harrison had settled down into steady and appreciative happiness, and had begun to indulge his fancies in matters apart from the honeymoon, there appeared upon the wall over the fireplace in his library a picture which unfailingly attracted the attention and curi-

osity of visitors to that hospitable hearth. The scene represented was but that upon an island in the Bering Sea, and there was in the aspect of it something more than the traditional abomination of desolation, for there was a touch of bloodthirsty and hungry life. Up away from the sea arose a stretch of dreary sand, and in the far distance were hills covered with snow and dotted with stunted pine, and bleak and forbidding, though not tenantless. In the foreground, close to the turbid waters which washed this frozen almost solitude, a great, gaunt wolf sat with his head uplifted to the lowering skies, and so well had the artist caught the creature's attitude, that looking upon it one could almost seem to hear the mournful but murderous howl and gathering cry.

This was only a fancy which George Henry had—that the wolf should hang above the fireplace—and perhaps it needed no such reminder to make of him the man he proved in helping those whom he knew the wolf was hunting. His eye was kindly keen upon his friends, and he was quick to perceive when one among them had begun to hear the howlings which had once tormented him so sorely; he fancied that there was upon the faces of those who listened often to that mournful music an expression peculiar to such suffering. And he found such ways as he could to cheer and comfort those unfortunate during their days of trial. He was a helpful man. It is good for a man to have had bad times.

AN ULM

"IT is as you say; he is not handsome, certainly not beautiful as flowers and the stars and women are, but he has another sort of beauty, I think, such a beauty as made Victor Hugo's monster, Gwynplaine, fascinating, or gives a certain sort of charm to a banded rattlesnake. He is not much like the dove-eyed setter over whom we shot woodcock this afternoon, but to me he is the fairest object on the face of the earth, this gaunt, brindled Ulm. There's such a thing as association of ideas, you know.

"What is there about an Ulm especially attractive? Well, I don't know. About Ulms in the abstract very little, I imagine. About an Ulm in the concrete, particularly the brute near us, a great deal. The Ulm is a morbid development in dog-breeding, anyhow. I remember, as doubtless you do as well, when the animals first made their appearance in this country a few years ago. The big, dirty-white beasts, dappled with dark blotches and with countenances unexplainably threatening, reminded one of hyenas with huge dog forms. Germans brought them over first, and they were affected by saloon-keepers and their class. They

called them Siberian bloodhounds then, but the dog-fanciers got hold of them, and they became, with their sinister obtrusiveness, a feature of the shows; the breed was defined more clearly, and now they are known as Great Danes or Ulms, indifferently. How they originated I never cared to learn. I imagine it sometimes. I fancy some jilted, jaundiced descendant of the sea-rovers, retiring to his castle, and endeavoring, by mating some ugly bloodhound with a wild wolf, to produce a quadruped as fierce and cowardly and treacherous as man or woman may be. He succeeded only partially, but he did well.

"Never mind about the dog, and tell you why I've been gentleman, farmer, sportsman and half-hermit here for the last five years—leaving everything just as I was getting a grip on reputation in town, leaving a pretty wife, too, after only a year of marriage? I can hardly do that—that is, I can hardly drop the dog, because, you see, he's part of the story. Hamlet would be left out decidedly were I to read the play without him. Besides, I've never told the story to any one. I'll do it, though, to-day. The whim takes me. Surely a fellow may enjoy the luxury of being recklessly confidential once in half a decade or so, especially with an old friend and a trusted one. No need for going far back with the legend. You know it all up to the time I was married. You dined with me once or twice later. You remember my wife? Certainly

she was a pretty woman, well bred, too, and wise, in a woman's way. I've seen a good deal of the world, but I don't know that I ever saw a more tactful entertainer, or in private a more adorable woman when she chose to be affectionate. I was in that fool's paradise which is so big and holds so many people, sometimes for a year and a half after marriage. Then one day I found myself outside the wall.

"There was a beautiful set to my wife's chin, you may recollect—a trifle strong for a woman; but I used to say to myself that, as students know, the mother most impresses the male offspring, and that my sons would be men of will. There was a fullness to her lips. Well, so there is to mine. There was a delicious, languorous craft in the look of her eyes at times. I cared not at all for that. I thought she loved me and knew me. Love of me would give all faithfulness; knowledge of me, even were the inclination to wrong existent, would beget a dread of consequences. My dear boy, we don't know women. Sometimes women don't know men. She did not know me any more than she loved me. She has become better informed.

"What happened? Well, now come in the dog and the man. The dog was given me by a friend who was dog-mad, and who said to me the puppy would develop into a marvel of his kind, so long a pedigree he had. I relegated the puppy to the servants and the basement, and forgot him. The man

came in the form of an accidental new friend, an old friend of my wife, as subsequently developed. I invited him to my house, and he came often. I liked to have him there. I wanted to go to Congress—you know all about that—and wasn't often at home in the evening. He made the evenings less lonely for my wife, and I was glad of it. I told her I would make amends for my absence when the campaign was over. She was all patience and sweetness.

"Meanwhile that brute of a puppy in the basement had been developing. He had grown into a great, rangy, long-toothed monster, with a leer on his dull face, and the servants were afraid of him. I got interested and made a pet of the uncouth animal. I studied the Ulm character. I learned queer things about him. Despite his size and strength, he was frequently overcome by other dogs when he wandered into the street. He was tame until the shadows began to gather and the sun went down. Then a change came upon him. He ranged about the basement, and none but I dared venture down there. He was, in short, a cur by day, at night a demon. I supposed the early dogs of this breed had been trained to night slaughter and savageness alone, and that it was a case of atavism, a recurrence of hereditary instinct. It interested me vastly, and I resolved to make him the most perfect of watchdogs. I trained him to lie couchant, and to spring upon and tear a

stuffed figure I would bring into the basement. I noticed he always sprang at the throat. 'Hard lines,' thought I, 'for the burglar who may venture here!'

"It was a little later than this nonsense with the dog, which was a piece of boyishness, a degree of relaxation to the strain of my fight with down-town conditions, that there came in what makes a man think the affairs of this world are not adjusted rightly, and makes recurrent the impulse which was first unfortunate for Abel—no doubt worse for Cain. There is no need for going into details of the story, how I learned, or when. My knowledge was all-sufficient and absolute. My wife and my friend were sinning, riotously and fully, but discreetly—sinning against all laws of right and honor, and against me. The mechanism of it was simple. The grounds back of my house, you know, were large, and you may not have forgotten the lane of tall, clipped shrubbery that led up from the rear to a summer-house. His calls in the evening were made early and ended early. The pinkness of all propriety was about them. The servants suspected nothing. But, his call ended, the graceful gentleman, friend of mine, and lover of my wife, would walk but a few hundred paces, then turn and enter my grounds at the rear gate I have mentioned, and pass up the arbor to the pretty summer-house. He would find time for pleasant anticipation there as he lolled upon one of the soft

divans with which I had furnished the charming place, but his waiting would not be long. She would soon come to him, and time passed swiftly.

"That is the prologue to my little play. Pretty prologue, isn't it?—but commonplace. The play proper isn't! The same conditions affect men differently. When I learned what I have told—after the first awful five minutes—I don't like to think of them, even now!—I became the most deliberate man on the face of this earth peopled with sinners. Sometimes, they say, the whole substance of a man's blood may be changed in a second by chemical action. My blood was changed, I think. The poison had transmuted it. There was a leaden sluggishness, but my head was clear.

"I had odd fancies. I remember I thought of a nobleman who had another torn slowly apart by horses for proving false to him at the siege of Calais. His cruelty had been a youthful horror to me. Now I had a tremendous appreciation of the man. 'Good fellow, good fellow!' I went about muttering to myself in a foolish, involuntary way. I wondered how my wife's lover could endure the strain of four strong Clydesdales, each started at the same moment, one north, one south, one east, one west. His charming personal appearance recurred to me, and I thought of his fine neck. Women like a fine-throated man, and he was one. I wondered if my wife's fancy tended the same

way. It was well this idea came to me, for it gave me an inspiration. I thought of the dog.

"There is no harm, is there, in training a dog to pull down a stuffed figure? There is no harm, either, if the stuffed figure be given the simulated habiliments of some friend of yours. And what harm can there be in training the dog in a garden arbor instead of in a basement? I dropped into the way of being at home a little more. I told my wife she should have alternate nights at least, and she was grateful and delighted. And on the nights when I was at home I would spend half an hour in the grounds with the dog, saying I was training him in new things, and no one paid attention. I taught him to crouch in the little lane close to the summer-house, and to rush down and leap upon the manikin when I displayed it at the other end. Ye gods! how he learned to tear it down and tear its imitation throat! The training over, I would lock him in the basement as usual. But one night I had a dispatch come to me summoning me to another city. The other man was to call that evening, and he came. I left before nine o'clock, but just before going I released the dog. He darted for the post in the garden, and with gleaming eyes crouched, as he had been accustomed to do, watching the entrance of the arbor.

"I can always sleep well on a train. I suppose the regular sequence of sounds, the rhythmic throb

of the motion, has something to do with it. I slept well the night of which I am telling, and awoke refreshed when I reached the city of my destination. I was driven to a hotel; I took a bath; I did what I rarely do, I drank a cocktail before breakfast, but I wanted to be luxurious. I sat down at the table; I gave my order, and then lazily opened the morning paper. One of the dispatches deeply interested me.

"'Inexplicable Tragedy' was the headline. By the way, 'Inexplicable Tragedy' contains just about the number of letters to fill a line neatly in the style of heading now the fashion. I don't know about such things, but it seems to me compact and neat and most effective. The lines which followed gave a skeleton of the story:

"'A WELL-KNOWN GENTLEMAN KILLED BY A DOG.

"'THEORY OF THE CASE WHICH APPEARS THE ONLY ONE POSSIBLE UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES.'

"I read the dispatch at length. A man is naturally interested in the news from his own city. It told how a popular club man had been found in the early morning lying dead in the grounds of a friend, his throat torn open by a huge dog, an Ulm, belonging to that friend, which had somehow escaped from the basement of the house, where it was usually confined. The gentleman had been a caller at the residence the same evening, and had

left at a comparatively early hour. Some time later the mistress of the place had gone out to a summer-house in the grounds to see that the servants had brought in certain things used at a luncheon there during the day, but had seen nothing save the dog, which snarled at her, when she had gone into the house again. In the morning the gardener found the body of Mr. —— lying about midway of an arbor leading from a gateway to the summer-house. It was supposed that the unfortunate gentleman had forgotten something, a message or something of that sort, and upon its recurrence to him had taken the shorter cut to reach the house again, as he might do naturally, being an intimate friend of the family. That was all there was of the dispatch.

"Oddly enough, I received no telegram from my wife, but under the circumstances I could do nothing else than return to my home at once. I sought my wife, to whom I expressed my horror and my sorrow, but she said very little. The dog I found in the basement, and he seemed very glad to see me. It has always been a source of regret to me that dogs cannot talk. I see that some one has learned that monkeys have a language, and that he can converse with them, after a fashion. If we could but talk with dogs!

"I saw the body, of course. I asked a famous surgeon once which would kill a man the quicker: severance of the carotid artery or the jugular vein?

I forget what his answer was, but in this case it really cut no figure. The dog had torn both open. It was on the left side. From this I infer that the dog sprang from the right, and that it was that big fang in his left upper jaw that did the work. Come here, you brute, and let me open your mouth! There, you see, as I turn his lips back, what a beauty of a tooth it is! I've thought of having that particular fang pulled, and of having it mounted and wearing it as a charm on my watch-chain, but the dog is likely to die long before I do, and I've concluded to wait till then. But it's a beautiful tooth!

"I've mentioned, I believe, that my wife was a woman of keen perception. You will understand that after the unfortunate affair in the garden, our relations were somewhat—I don't know just what word to use, but we'll say 'quaint.' It's a pretty little word, and sounds grotesque in this conversation. One day I provided an allowance for her, a good one, and came away here alone to play farmer and shoot and fish for four or five years. Somehow I lost interest in things, and knew I needed a rest. As for her, she left the house very soon and went to her own home. Oddly enough, she is in love with me now—in earnest this time. But we shall not live together again. I could never eat a peach off which the street vendors had rubbed the bloom. I never bought goods sold after a fire, even though externally untouched. I

don't believe much in salvage as applied to the relations of men and women. I've seen, in the early morning, the unfortunates who eat choice bits from the garbage barrels. So they stifle a hunger, but I couldn't do it, you know. Odd, isn't it, what little things will disturb the tenor of a man's existence and interfere with all his plans?

"I came here and brought the dog with me. I'm fond of him, despite the failings in his character. Notwithstanding his currishness and the cowardly ferocity which comes out with the night, there is something definite about him. You know what to expect and what to rely upon. He does something. That is why I like Ulm.

"What am I going to do? Why, come back to town next year and pick up the threads. My nerves, which seemed a little out of the way, are better than they were when I came here. There's nothing to equal country air. I must have that whirl in my district yet. I don't think the boys have quite forgotten me. Have you noticed the drift at all? I could only judge from the papers. How are things in the Ninth Ward?"

THE HAIR OF THE DOG THAT BIT HIM

I HAVE read hundreds of queer histories. I have myself had various adventures, but I know of no experience more odd than that of an old schoolmate of mine named John Appleman. John was born in Macomb County, southeastern Michigan, in the year 1830. His father owned a farm of one hundred acres there. John's mother died when he was but a lad, and after that he lived alone with his father upon the farm. In 1855 John's father died. In 1856 John married a pretty girl of the neighborhood. A year later a child was born to them, a daughter. This is the brief history of John Appleman up to the time when he began to develop his real personality.

He was a contented personage in his early married life. His wife, while not a shrew, had undoubted force of character, but there was not much attrition; and his little daughter was, in John's estimation, the fairest child upon the continent. Personally, he was content with all the world, though his wife was somewhat less so. John had his failings. He was not counted among the farmers of the neighborhood as a "pushing" man. There was still much woodland in Macomb County

in the year 1857, and in autumn the woods were most enticing. Squirrels, black and gray, were still abundant where the oak and hickory were; the ruffled grouse still fed in families upon beech-nuts on the ridges and the thorn-apples of the lowlands. The wild turkey still strutted about in flocks rapidly thinning, and occasionally a deer fell to the lot of the shrewd hunter. John liked to hunt and fish. He wasted time that way, his neighbors said, and his wife was of the same opinion. It is true, he possessed certain qualities which, even in their utilitarian eyes, commanded some slight respect. He was so close to nature in his thoughts and fancies that he knew many things which they did not, and which had a money value. It was he, for instance, who first recognized the superior quality of the White Neshannock, the potato of the time. It was he who grafted the Baldwin upon his apple-trees, recognizing the fact that this particular apple was a toothsome and marketable and relatively non-decaying fruit. And it was he who could judge best as to what crosses and combinations would most improve the breed of horses and cattle and hogs and sheep. They admitted his "faculty," as they called it, in certain directions, but they had a profound contempt for him in others. They could not understand why he would leave standing in the midst of a wheat-field a magnificent soft maple, the branches of which shaded and made untillable an area of

scores of yards. They could not understand why he hesitated to murder a tree. So it came that he was with them while scarcely of them, and that Mrs. Appleman, who could not comprehend, belonged to the majority.

It must not be understood that John Appleman was unpopular. On the contrary, each sturdy farmer rather liked while he criticised him. Had John run for township clerk, or possibly even for supervisor, that most important of township honors throughout Michigan, he might have been elected, but John did not know his strength. He recognized his own weakness, after a fashion. He knew that he would work violently for a month or two at a time, giving the vigorous hired man a decent test in holding his physical own, and he knew that after that he would become what the people called "slack," and a little listless; and it was in his slack times that the squirrel and grouse most suffered. Between him and the wife of his bosom had grown nothing so grave as to be described as an armed neutrality; but more and more he hesitated in entering the house after an evening's work, and more and more he drifted down to the Corners—that is, the cross-roads where were the postoffice and the blacksmith-shop and the general store. He liked to be with the other fellows. He liked human companionship; and since his fellows drank, he began to drink with them. It is needless to explain how the habit grew upon him.

The man who drinks whisky affects his stomach, and the stomach affects the nerves, and there is a sort of arithmetical progression until the stimulant eventually seems to become almost a part of life; and the man, unless he be one of great force of character, or one most knowing and scientific, must yield eventually to the stress of close conditions. Time came when John Appleman yielded, and carried whisky home in a gallon jug and hid it in the haymow.

Need does not exist for any going into details, for telling of what happened at the cross-roads store, of what good stories were related day by day and week by week and month by month, while the cup went round; it is sufficient to say that the stomach of John Appleman became querulous when he had not taken a stimulant within a limited number of hours, and that he was in a fair way of becoming an ordinary drunkard. With his experience and decadence came, necessarily, an expertness of judgment as to the quality of that which he drank. He could tell good liquor from bad, the young from the old.

It came that, being thoughtful and imaginative, John Appleman decided that he, at least, should drink better liquor than did tipplers in general. He would not be seen a weakly vagrant, buying his jugful at the corner store; neither would he drink raw liquor. He would buy it in quantity and let it age upon his farm, and so with each replenishing

of the jug from his private store would come an increase in quality derived from greater age, until in time each daily tipple would be an absorption of something so smooth and potent that immediate subsequent existence would be a thing desirable in all ways. And John Appleman had a plan.

The Appleman barn and house stood perhaps three hundred yards apart, near the crest of what was hardly worthy the name of hill, which sloped downward into what they called the "flats," through which the creek ran. The barn stood very close to uncleared woodland, and the banks ending the woodland showed a decidedly rocky exterior. Appleman, chasing a woodchuck one day, had seen him scurry into a hole in this rocky surface, and prying away with a handspike had unloosed a small mass of rock and discovered a cave; not much of a cave, it is true, but one of at least twenty feet in length and eight or ten in breadth, and full six feet in height. This discovery occurred a year or two before John felt the grip of any stimulant. He had forgotten all about it until there came to him the idea of drinking better whisky than did other people.

John had sold a yoke of oxen and a Blackhawk colt, and two hundred dollars in gold were resting heavily in his little cherry-wood desk in the farm-house sitting-room. One day he took ten of these gold-pieces and went to town; not to the cross-roads, but to the larger place, some ten miles dis-

tant, where was a distillery, and there he bought two barrels of whisky. Whisky in those days, before the time of present taxes, was sold from the distillery at prices ranging from thirty-five to fifty cents a gallon, about forty-seven gallons to a barrel. The team of horses dragged wearily home the heavy load; but they did not stop when home was reached, either in front of the house or at the barnyard gate. Instead, they were turned aside through a rude gate leading into the flats, and thence drew the load to the mouth of the little cave, where, unseen by any one, Appleman tilted the barrels out and left them lying on the sward.

Other things had been bought in town that day, and Appleman had no difficulty in giving reasons for the lateness of his home-coming. Next day, though, he was a busy man. By the exercise of main strength, and the leverage afforded with a strong ironwood handspike, he succeeded in rolling both those barrels into the cave and uptilting them, and leaving them standing high and dry. The cave was as dry as a bone. He noted with satisfaction the overhanging clay bank above, and felt that if he were to be called away his treasure would be safe, since the opening would doubtless soon be hidden from the sight of anybody. When he went to bed that night he thought much of the hidden barrels.

An incident has been neglected in this account. When John Appleman bought those barrels, the

son of the distiller, a boy of ten, was told to see that two designated barrels were rolled out from the storeroom. The boy marked them, utilizing the great chunk of red chalk which every country boy carried in his pocket some forty years ago. Furthermore, being a boy and having time to waste, he decorated the barrels with various grotesque figures, the ungainly fruit of his imagination. This boy's work with that piece of red chalk had an effect upon the future of John Appleman.

So things drifted, the whisky in the cave getting a little older, the friction between John Appleman and his more business-like wife getting somewhat more vigorous and emitting more domestic sparks, until there came a change to every one. The farmer, who had read of martial music, heard with his own ears the roll of the drum and the shrieking, encouraging call of the fife. War was on, and good men abandoned homes and families and surroundings because of what we call patriotism and principle. As for John Appleman, he was among the very first to enlist. He went into the army blithely. It is to be feared that John Appleman, like many a worthier man, preferred the various conditions appertaining to the tented field and the field of battle to that narrower scene of conflict called the home. Before leaving, however, he crept into the cave and varnished those two barrels with exceeding thoroughness.

"That will rather modify the process of evapora-

tion. There will be good whisky there when I come home next year," he said.

John Appleman went to the war with a Michigan regiment, and it is but justice to him to say that he made an amazingly good soldier. He was made corporal and sergeant, and later second lieutenant, and filled that position gallantly until the war ended. That was his record in the great struggle. Meanwhile his home relations had somewhat changed.

Rather happier in the army than on the farm, John Appleman had felt a sense of half-gratitude that there had been no objection to his departure, and for months after he left Michigan he sent most of his soldier's pay home to his wife. Then came promotion and little attendant expenses, and he sent less. There came no letter, and after a while he sent nothing at all. "They have a good farm there which should support them," so he said to himself; "as for me, I am a poor fellow battling along down here, and what little I get I need." There ceased to be any remittances, and there ceased to be any correspondence.

The war ended and John Appleman was free again; but he had a personal acquaintance with a friend of the Confederate Major John Edwards of Missouri, the right-hand man of the daring General Joe Shelby. There were meetings and an exchange of plans and confidences, and the end of it all was, that Appleman rode into Mexico on that

famous foray led by Shelby, when the tottering throne of Maximilian was almost given new foundation by the quixotic raiders. The story of that foray is well known, and there is no occasion for repeating it. It need only be said that when Shelby's men rode gayly home again, John Appleman was not in their company. He had met an old friend in the turbulent City of Mexico; had, with due permission, abandoned the ranks of the wild riders, and had fled away to where were supposable peace and quiet. There was something of cowardice in his action now. He had delayed his home-going; he should have been in Michigan shortly after Appomattox, and now he was afraid to face his vigorous wife and make an explanation. In Guaymas, on the western coast, he thought peace might be. So he bestrode a mule, and with his friend traveled laboriously to the shores of the Pacific, and there with this same friend dropped into the lazy but long life of the latitude.

If one had no memory one could do many things. Memory clings ever to a man's coat-tails and drags him back to where he was before. There was a tug upon the coat-tails of John Appleman. He was homesick at times. The musky odors of the coast in blooming time often oppressed him. The fragrance of the tropic blossom had never become sweeter in his nostrils than the breath of northern pines. He wanted to go home, but feared to do so. Mrs. Appleman was assuming monumental

proportions in his estimation. And so the years went by, and John Appleman, dealing out groceries in Guaymas for such brief hours of the day as people bought things, his partner relieving him half the time, hungered more with each passing year to see southeastern Michigan, and with each passing year became more alarmed over the prospect of facing the partner of his joys and sorrows there. He was an Anglo-Saxon, far away from home, and the racial instinct and the home instinct were very strong upon him.

With a tendency toward becoming a drunkard when he left home, John Appleton had not developed into one, either during his long experience as a soldier, or later in western Mexico. There was nothing unexplainable in this. Certain men of a certain quality, worried and hampered, are liable to resort to stimulants; the same sort of men, unhampered, need no stimulants at all. To such as these pure air and nature are stimulants sufficient. Whoever heard of a drunken pioneer and facer of natural difficulties, from Natty Bumpo of imagination to Kit Carson of reality? John Appleman as a soldier did not drink. As a half idler in Guaymas he tried, casually, *mescal* and *aguardiente* and all Mexican intoxicants, but cast them aside as things unnecessary. More years passed, and finally fear of Mrs. Appleman became to an extent attenuated, while the scent of the clover-blossoms gained intensity. And one morn-

ing in April, of the good year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four, John Appleman said to himself: "I am going home to take the consequences. The old lady"—thus honestly he spoke to himself—"can't be any worse than this hunger in me. I am going to Michigan."

So he started from Guaymas. He had very little money. The straightening up of affairs showed him to possess only about four hundred dollars to the good, but he started gallantly, shirking in his mind the meeting, but overpowered by the homing instinct, the instinct which leads the carrier-pigeon to its cot.

Meanwhile there had been living and change upon the farm. Mother and daughter, left together, existed comfortably for some years, with the aid of the one hired man. The war over, the wife waited patiently the return of the husband from whom no letter had come for a long time, but who she knew was still alive, learning this from returning members of his company, who had told of his good services. She had learned later of his companionship with the Confederate group under Shelby; but as time passed and no word came, doubt grew upon her. She wrote to some of the leaders of that wild campaign, and learned from their kindly answers that her husband had been lost from them somewhere in Mexico. Both she and her daughter finally decided that he must have met death. In 1867 Mrs. Appleman put on

mourning, and she and Jane, the daughter, settled down into the management of their own affairs.

As heretofore indicated, the farm had not been a bonanza, even when its master was in charge, though its soil was rich and it was a most desirable inheritance. Even less profitable did it become under the management of the supposed widow and her daughter. They struggled courageously and faithfully, but they were at a disadvantage. The mowing-machine and the reaper had taken the place of the scythe and cradle. The singing of the whetstone upon steel was heard no longer in the meadows nor among the ripened grain. The harrow had cast out the hoe. The work of the farm was accomplished by patent devices in wood and steel. To utilize these aids, to keep up with the farming procession, required a degree of capital, and no surplus had accrued upon the Appleman farm. Mrs. Appleman was compelled to borrow when she bought her mowing-machine, and the slight mortgage then put upon the place was increased when other necessary purchases were made in time. The mortgage now amounted to eleven hundred dollars, and had been that for over four years, the annual interest being met with the greatest difficulty. The farm, even with the few improved facilities secured, barely supported the widow and her daughter. They could lay nothing aside, and now, in 1894, there was not merely a threat, but the certainty, of a foreclosure unless the

eleven hundred dollars should be paid. It was due on the twentieth of September. It was the first of September when John Appleman started from Guaymas for home. It was nine days later when he left the little Michigan station in the morning and walked down the country road toward his farm.

He was sixty-four years of age now, but he was a better-looking man than he was when he entered the army. His step was vigorous, his eye was clear, and there was lacking all that dull look which comes to the countenance of the man who drinks intoxicants. He was breathing deeply as he walked, and gazing with a sort of childish delight upon the Michigan landscape about him.

It seemed to Appleman as if he were awakening from a dream. Real dreams had often come to him of this scene and his return to it, but the reality exceeded the figments of the night. A quail whistled, and he compared its note with that of its crested namesake in Mexico, much to the latter's disadvantage. A flicker passed in dipping flight above the pasture, and it seemed to him that never before was such a golden color as that upon its wings. Even the call of the woodpecker was music to him, and the chatter and chirr of a red squirrel perched jauntily on the rider of a rail fence seemed to him about the most joyous sound he had ever heard. He felt as if he were somehow being born again. And when his own farm

came into view, the feeling but became intensified. He thought he had never seen so fair a place.

He crossed the bridge above the creek which flowed through his own farm, and saw a man engaged in cutting away the willow bush which had assumed too much importance along the borders of the little stream. He called the man to him, and did what was a wise thing, something of which he had thought much during his long railroad journey.

"Are you working for Mrs. Appleman?" he asked.

The man answered in the affirmative.

"Well," said John, "I want you to go up to the house and say to her that her husband has come back and will be there in a few minutes."

The man started for the house. Appleman sat down on the edge of the bridge and let his legs dangle above the water, just as he had done many years ago when he was a barefooted boy and had fished for minnows with a pin hook. How would his wife receive him, and what could he say to her? Well, he would tell her the truth, that was all, and take the chances. He rose and went up the road until opposite his own gate. How familiar the yard seemed to him! There was the gravel path leading from the gate to the door, and the later flowers, the asters and dahlias, were in bloom on either side, just as they were when he went away in 1861. The brightness of the fore-

noon was upon everything, and it was all invigorating. He opened the gate and walked toward the house, and just as he reached his hand toward the latch of the door, it opened, and a woman whose hair was turning gray put her arms about his neck and drew him inside, weeping, and with the exclamation, "Oh, John!"

There was another woman, fair-faced and demure, whom he did not recognize at first, but who kissed him and called him father. Of what else happened at this meeting I do not know. The reunion was at least good, and John Appleman was a very happy man.

But the practical phases of life are prompt in asserting themselves. It was not long before John Appleman knew the problem he had to face. There was a mortgage nearly due for eleven hundred dollars on the farm, and he had in his possession only about three hundred dollars. A shrewder financier than he might have known how to renew the mortgage, or to lift it by making a new one elsewhere, for the farm was worth many times the sum involved. But Appleman was not a financier. The burden of anxiety which had rested upon his wife and daughter now descended upon him. He brooded and worried until he saw the hour of execution only five days off, with no reasonable existent prospect of saving himself. He wandered about the fields, plotting and planning vaguely, but to little purpose. One day he stood beside

the creek, gazing absent-mindedly toward the hillside.

Something about the hillside, some association of ideas, perhaps the view of a gnarled honeysuckle-bush where he had gathered flowers in his childhood, set his memory working, and there flashed upon him the incident of the cave, and what he had left concealed there when he went into the army. He looked for the cave's entrance, but saw none. The matter began to interest him. Why there was no entrance visible was easily explained. Clay had overrun with the spring rains from the cultivated field above, building gradually upward from the bottom of the little hill until the aperture had been entirely hidden. This deposit of clay, a foot perhaps in depth, reached nearly to the summit of the slight declivity. Appleman began speculating as to where the cave might be, and his curiosity so grew upon him that he resolved to learn. He cut a stout blue-beach rod and sharpened one of it, and estimating as closely as he could where the little cave had been, thrust in his testing-pole. Scarcely half a dozen ventures were required to attain his object. He found the cave, then went to the barn and secured a spade and came back to do a little digging. He had begun to feel an interest in the fate of those two whisky barrels. It was not a difficult work to effect an entrance to the cave, and within an hour from the time he began digging Appleman was inside and examining

things by the aid of a lantern which he had brought. He was astonished. The cave had evidently never been entered by any one save himself; all was dry and clean, and the two barrels stood apparently just as he had left them, over thirty years ago. He decided that they must be empty, that their contents must have long since evaporated; but when he tried to tilt one of them over upon its side he found it very heavy. He made further test that day, boring a hole into the top of one of the barrels, with the result that there came forth a fragrance compared with which, to a judge of good liquor, all the perfumes of Araby the Blest would be of no importance. He measured the depth of the remaining contents, and found that each barrel was more than two-thirds full. Then he hitched a horse to a buggy and drove to town—drove to the same distillery where he had bought those barrels in the latter fifties. The distiller of that time had passed away and his son reigned in his stead—the youth who had decorated the barrels with the red chalk-marks. To him, now a keen, middle-aged business man, Appleman told his story. The distiller was deeply interested, but incredulous. "I will drive back with you," he said; and late that afternoon the two men visited the cave.

The visit was a brief one. No sooner did the distiller observe those lurid hieroglyphics upon the barrels than he uttered a shout of delight. There

came back to him the memory of that afternoon so many years ago, and of his boyish exploit in decoration. He applied his nose judicially to the auger-hole in the barrel's top. He estimated the amount of spirits in each. "I wouldn't have believed it," he said, "if I hadn't seen it. It's because you varnished the barrels. That made evaporation slow. I'll give you twenty dollars a gallon for all there is of it."

"I'll take it," said John Appleman.

There were in those two barrels just seventy-six gallons of whisky, to compare with which in quality there was practically nothing else upon the continent; at least so swore the distiller. Twenty times seventy-six dollars is fifteen hundred and twenty dollars. The mortgage on the farm was paid, and John Appleman and wife and daughter leaned back content, out of debt, and, counting the little John had brought home, with four or five hundred dollars to the good in the county bank. They are doing very well now. Appleman regrets the disappearance of the deer, wild turkey and ruffed grouse, but the quail are abundant, and the flowers bloom as brightly and the birds sing as sweetly as in the days before the war. Time, just as it improved the whisky, has improved his wife, and she has a mellower flavor. He prefers Michigan to Mexico.

I have read somewhere that there is a moral to the life of every man. I have often speculated as to the moral appertaining to the career of Apple-

man. If he had never bought those two barrels of whisky he would have lost his farm. On the other hand, had he never taken to drink, he might have remained at home an ordinary decent citizen, and his farm have never been in peril. The only moral I have been able to deduce is this: If by any chance you come into possession of any quantity of whisky, don't drink it, but bury it for thirty-five years at least, and see what will happen.

THE MAN WHO FELL IN LOVE

HE lived in one of the great cities in this country, the man who fell in love, and was in that city a character at least a little above the ordinary rut of men. He had talent and energy, and there had come to him a hard schooling in city ways, though he was born in the forest, and his youth had been passed upon a farm sloping downward to the shore of the St. Clair River, that wonderful strait and stretch of water which flows between broad meadow-lands and wheat-fields and connects Lake Huron with the lower lake system, and itself becomes at last the huge St. Lawrence tumbling down into the Atlantic Ocean. Upon the St. Clair River now passes hourly, in long procession, the huge fleet of the lakes, the grain and ore laden crafts of Lake Superior, queer "whalebacks" and big propellers, and the vast fleet of merchantmen from Chicago and Milwaukee and other ports of the inland seas. The procession upon the watery blue ribbon a mile in width, stretching across the farm lands, is something not to be seen elsewhere upon the globe. The boats seen from a distance appear walking upon the land. Broad sails show white and startling against green groves upon the shore, and the

funnels of steamers rear themselves like smoking stumps of big trees beyond a corn-field. Here passes a traffic greater in tonnage than that of the Suez Canal, of the Mersey, or even of the Thames. But it was not so when the man who fell in love was a boy. There were dense forests upon the river's banks then, and only sailing crafts and an occasional steamer passed, for that was half a century ago.

The man who was to fall in love, as will be told, had, in the whirl of city life, almost forgotten the sturdy days when he was a youngster in the little district school, when at other times he rode a mare dragging an old-fashioned "cultivator," held by his father between the corn rows, and when the little farm hewed out of the woodland had yet stumps on every acre, when "loggings" and "raisings" drew the pioneers together, and when he, one of the first-born children of that region, had fled for comfort in every boyish strait to a gentle, firm-faced woman who was his mother. He had, with manhood, drifted to the city, and had become one of the city's cream in all acuteness and earnestness and what makes the pulse of life, when thousands and tens and hundreds of thousands congregate to live together in one vast hive. He was a man of affairs, a man of the world, easily at home among traders and schemers for money, at a political meeting, at a banquet, or in society. Sometimes, in the midst of things, would float before his eyes a vision

of woods, of dark soil, of a buckwheat field, of squirrels on brush fences, of a broad, blue river, and finally of a face, maternal and sweet, with brown eyes, hovering over him watchfully and lovingly. He would think of the earnest, thoughtful, bold upbringing of him, and his heart would go out to the woman; but the tide of city affairs rose up and swept away the vision. Still, he was a good son, as good sons at a distance go, and occasionally wrote a letter to the woman growing older and older, or sent her some trifle for remembrance. He was reasonably content with himself.

Here comes another phase of description in this brief account of affairs of the man who fell in love. One afternoon a woman sat in an arm-chair on the long porch in front of what might have by some been called a summer cottage, by others a farm-house, overlooking the St. Clair River. The chair she sat in was of oak, with no arms, and tilted easily backward, yet with no chance of tipping clear over. It must have cost originally about four dollars. In its early days it had possessed a cane back and cane bottom, through the round holes of which the little children were accustomed to thrust their fingers, getting them caught sometimes, and howling until released. Now its back was of stout canvas, and its seat of cords, upon which a cushion rested. It was in general appearance, though stout enough, a most disreputable chair among the finer and more modern ones which

stood along the porch upon either side. But it was this chair that the aging woman loved. "It was this chair he liked," she would say, "and it shall not be discarded. He used to sit in it and rock and dream, and it shall stay there while I live." She spoke the truth. It was that old chair the boy, now the city man, had liked best of all.

She sat there, this gray-haired woman, a picture of one of the mothers who have made this nation what it is. The hair was drawn back simply from the broad, clear forehead, and her strong aquiline features were sweet, with all their force. Her dress was plain. She sat there, looking across the blue waters thoughtfully, and at moments wistfully.

Not far from the woman on the long, broad porch was a pretty younger woman, and beside her two children were playing. The younger woman, the mother of the tumbling youngsters, was the niece of the elder one in the rude old rocking-chair. She spoke to the two children at times, repressing them when they became too boisterous, or petting and soothing when misadventure came to either of them in their gambols. At last she moved close to the elder, and began to talk. The conversation was about the children, and there was much to say, the gray-haired woman listening kindly and interestedly. Finally she spoke.

"Take comfort with the children now, Louisa," she said, gently, "because it will be best for you. It is a strange thing; it is something we cannot

comprehend, though doubtless it is all for the best, but I often think that my happiest days were when my children were little, climbing about my skirts, dependent upon me for everything, as birds in the nest are dependent, and with all my anxiety over them, giving me the greatest comfort that can come to a woman. But the years passed, and the children went away. They are good men and women; I am proud of them, but they are mine no longer. They love the old mother, too, I know that—when they think of her. But, oh, Louisa! there is lead in my heart sometimes. I want something closer. But I'll not complain. Why should I? It is the law of nature." And she sighed and looked again across the blue water. There were tears in the corners of her eyes.

The niece, hopeful in the pride of young motherhood, replied consolingly: "Aunt, you should be proud of your children. Even Jack, the oldest of them all, is as good as he can be. Think of his long letters once in a while. He loves you dearly."

"Yes," the old lady replied; "I know he loves me—when he thinks of old times and his boyhood. But, Louisa, I am very lonesome."

And again her eyes sought the water and the yellow wheat-fields of the farther shore.

The road which follows the American bank of the St. Clair River is a fine thing in its way. It is what is known as a "dirt" road, well kept and

level, of the sort beloved of horses and horsemen, and it lies close to the stream, between it and the farm lands. At every turn a new and wonderful panorama of green and yellow landscape and azure expanse of water bursts upon the lucky traveler along this blessed highway. Still, being a "dirt" road, when one drives along it at speed there arises in midsummer a slight pillar of dust as the conveyance passes, and one may from a distance note the approach of a possible visitor.

"There's a carriage coming, aunt," said the younger woman.

The carriage came along rapidly, and with a sudden check the horses were brought to a standstill in front of the house upon the porch of which the two women were sitting. Out of the carriage bounded a broad-shouldered gentleman, who stopped only for a moment to give directions to the driver concerning the bringing of certain luggage to the house, and who then strode up the pathway confidently. The elder woman upon the porch looked upon the performance without saying a word, but when the man had got half-way up the walk she rose from the chair, moved swiftly for a woman of her age to where the broad steps from the pathway led up to the porch, and met the ascending visitor with the simple exclamation:

"Jack, my boy!"

Jack, the "my boy" of the occasion, seemed a trifle affected himself. He looked the city man,

every inch of him, and was one known under most circumstances to be self-contained, but upon this occasion he varied a little from his usual form. He stooped to kiss the woman who had met him, and then, changing his mind, reached out his arms and hugged her a little as he kissed her. It was a good meeting.

There was much to talk about, and the mother's face was radiant; but the instinct of caring and providing for the being whom she had brought into the world soon became paramount in her breast, and she moved, as she had done decades ago, to provide for the physical needs of her child. This man of the world from the city was but the barefooted six-year-old whom she had borne and loved and fed and guarded in the years that were past. She must care for him now. And so she told him that he must have supper, and that he must let her go; and there was a sweet tinge of motherly authority in her words—unconsciously to her, arbitrary and unconsciously to him, submissive—and she left him to smoke upon the broad porch, and dawdle in the chair he remembered so well, and talk with the bright Louisa.

As for the supper—it would in the city have been called a dinner—it was good. There were fine things to eat. What about biscuits, so light and fragrant and toothsome that the butter is glad to meet them? What about honey, brought by the bees fresh from the buckwheat-field? What about

ham and eggs, so fried that the appetite-tempting look of the dish and the smell of it makes one a ravenous monster? What about old-fashioned "cookies" and huckleberry pie which melts in the mouth? What about a cup of tea—not the dyed green abomination, but luscious black tea, with the rich old flavor of Confucian ages to it, and a velvety smoothness to it and softness in swallowing? What about preserves, recalling old memories, and making one think of bees and butterflies and apples on the trees and pumpkins in the corn-rows, and robins and angle-worms and brown-armed men in the hay-fields? Eh, but it was a supper!

It was late when the man from the city went to bed, and there was much talk, for he had told his mother that he intended to stay a little longer this time than in the past; that he had been bothered and fled away from everything for rest. "We'll go up the river to-morrow," said he, "just you and I, and 'visit' with each other."

He went to his room and got into bed, and then came a little tap at his door. His mother entered. She asked the big strong man how he felt, and patted his cheek and tucked the bedclothes in about his feet and kissed him, and went away. He went back forty years. And he repeated reverently—he could not help it—"Now I lay me," and slept well.

There was a breakfast as fine as had been the supper, and as for the coffee, the hardened man of the city and jests and cynicism found himself won-

dering that there should have developed jokes about what "mother used to make." The more he thought of it, the madder he became. "We are a nation of cheap laughers," he said to himself savagely.

At nine o'clock the mother came out to where the man was smoking on the piazza, with her bonnet on and ready for the little boat-trip. They were to go to the outlet of Lake Huron and back. They would have luncheon either at Sarnia or Port Huron. They would decide when the time came. They were two vagrants.

Dawdling in steamer chairs and looking upon the Michigan shore sat little mother of the country and big son of the city. The woman—the blessed silver-haired creature—forgot herself, and talked to the son as a crony. She pointed out spots upon the shore where she, an early teacher in the wilderness, had adventures before he was born. There was Bruce's Creek, emptying into the river; and Mr. Bruce, most long-lived of pioneers, had but lately died, aged one hundred and five years. There was where the little school-house stood in which she once taught school in 1836. There was where she, riding horseback with a sweetheart who later became governor of the state, once joined with him in a riotous and aimless chase after a black bear which had crossed the road. Her cheeks, upon which there were not many wrinkles, glowed as she told the story of her youth to the man beside her. He

looked upon her with the full intelligence of a great relationship for the first time in his life. He fell in love with her.

It dawned upon this man, trained, cynical, an arrogant production of the city, what this woman had been to him. She alone of all the human beings in the world had clung to him faithfully. She had borne and bred, and now she cherished him, and for one who could see beneath the shell and see the mind and soul, she was wonderfully fair to look upon. He had neglected her in all that is best and most appreciated of what would make a mother happiest. But now he was in love. Here came in the man. He had the courage to go right in to the woman, a little while after they had reached home, and tell her all about it. And the foolish woman cried!

A man with a sweetheart has, of course, to look after her and provide for her amusement. So it happened that Jack the next morning announced in arbitrary way to his mother that they were going to Detroit.

Men who have been successful in love will remember that after the first declaration and general admission of facts the woman is for a time most obedient. So it came that this man's sweetheart obeyed him implicitly, and went upstairs to get ready for the journey. She came down almost blushing.

"My bonnet," she said, as she came from her

room smelling of lavender and dressed for the journey, "is a little old-fashioned, but it just suits me; I am old-fashioned myself."

She was smiling with the happy look of a girl.

Jack looked at her admiringly. She wore the black silk dress which every American woman considers it only decent that she should have. It was made plainly, without ruffles or bugles or lace, and it fitted her erect, stately figure perfectly. A broad real lace collar encircled her neck, and Jack recognized with delight the solid gold brooch—in shape like nothing that was ever on sea or land—with which it was fastened. It was a relic from the dim past. Jack remembered that piece of jewelry as far back as his memory stretched.

The old lady's hands were neatly gloved, and her feet were shod with substantial, well-kept laced shoes. Everything about her was immaculate. Jack knew that she had never laid aside the white petticoats and stockings it was her pride to keep spotless. She abominated the new fashions of black and silk. Jack could hear her starched skirts rustle as she came toward him. Her bonnet was black and in style of two or three years back, and its silk and lace were a trifle rusty.

"Never mind, mother, we will buy you a bonnet 'as is a bonnet' before we come back," the man said as he kissed the happy, shining face.

The steamers which ply between Detroit and Port Huron and Sarnia are big and sumptuous, and upon

them one sits under awnings in midsummer, and if knowing, takes much delight in the wonderful scenery passed. The St. Clair River pours into St. Clair Lake, and Lake St. Clair is one of the great idling places of those upon this continent who can afford to idle. It is a shallow lake, upon the American side stretching out into what are known as the "Flats," a vast area of wild rice with deep blue waterways through them, the haunt of the pickerel and black bass and of duck and wild geese. Upon the Canadian side, the Thames River comes through the lowlands, a deep and reed-fringed stream to contribute to the lake's pure waters. It was upon the banks of this stream, a little way from the lake, that the great Indian, Tecumseh, fought his last fight and died as a warrior should. There is nothing that is not beautiful on the waterway from Lake Huron to Lake St. Clair. It is just the place in which to realize how good the world is. It is just the place for lovers. So Jack, the man who had fallen in love, and his gray-haired sweetheart were vastly content as the steamer bore them toward Detroit.

The man looked upon the woman in a cherishing mood as she sat beside him in a comfortable chair. He noted again the gray hair, thinner than it was once, and thought of the time when he, a thoughtless boy, wondered at its mass and darkness. He compared the pale, aquiline features with the beauty of the woman who, centuries ago it seemed, was

accustomed to take him in her lap and cuddle him and make him brave when childish misadventures came. A greater wave of love than ever came over him. He regretted the lost years when he might have made her happier, might have given her a greater realization of what she had done in the world with her firm example, in a new country, and the strong brood she had borne and suffered for. And he had manhood enough and a sudden impulse to tell her all about it. She listened, but said nothing, and clasped his hand. Mothers will cry sometimes.

The city was reached, and there was a proper luncheon, and then the arbitrary son dragged his sweetheart out upon the street with him. The first thing, the matter of great importance, was the bonnet, not that he cared for the bonnet particularly, but he was a-sweethearting. He was going to spoil his girl if he could, that was what he said. His girl only looked up with glistening eyes, and submitted obediently to be haled along in the direction of a "swell" milliner's place, the name of which Jack had secured after much examination of the directory and much inquiry in offices where he was acquainted.

As they walked along the busy street they met a lady of unmistakably distinguished appearance. Instantly she recognized the mother and son, and stopped to greet them.

She was an old playmate of Jack's and a protégé

of his mother's, now the wife of a man of brains, influence, money, and a leader in the social life of the City of the Straits.

There came an inspiration to the man. "Mrs. Sheldon," said he, "I want you to help us. We are this moment about to engage in a business transaction of great importance; in fact, if you must know the worst, we are going to buy a bonnet!"

Mrs. Sheldon entered into the shopping expedition with a zest which reminded Jack of the Scriptural battle-steed which sayeth "Ha-ha" to the trumpets. When the brief but brisk and determined engagement was over, Jack's mother appeared in a bonnet of delicate gray, just a shade darker than her silver hair. There was a pink rose in that bonnet, half hidden by lace, and in the cheeks of its wearer faintly bloomed two other pink roses. It was just a dream in bonnets as suited to the woman. The mother had protested prettily, had said the bonnet was "too young" and all that, but had been browbeaten and overcome and made submissive. Mrs. Sheldon was in her element, and happy. Well she knew the man of the world who had demanded her aid, and much she wanted to please him; but deeper than all, her woman's instinct told her of his suddenly realized love for his old mother, and she was no longer a woman of fashion alone, but a helpful human being. Even her own eyes were suspiciously moist as she dragged the couple off to dine with her.

They were to go to the theater that evening, the man and his sweetheart, and by chance stumbled upon a well-staged comic opera, with good music and brilliant and picturesque although occasionally scanty costumes. On the way down the son told the mother of how in Detroit, way back in the sixties, he had seen for the first time a theatrical performance. He told her what she had forgotten, how she had induced his father to take him to the city, and how, in what was "Young Men's Hall," or something with a similar name, he had seen Laura Keene in "A School for Scandal." Then she remembered, and was glad. They had seats in a box at the theater, and from the rising of the curtain till its final drop the man was in much doubt. The manner in which women were dressed upon the stage had changed since the last time when his mother had visited the theater. She was shocked when she saw the forms of women, which, if at least well covered, were none the less outlined.

There was talking in that box. The son explained. The blessed woman almost "bolted" once or twice, but finally accepted all that was told her with the precious though sometimes mistaken confidence a woman has in the matured judgment of the man-child she has borne. Then, having a streak of the Viking recklessness in her which she had given to her son, she enjoyed herself amazingly. It was a glorious outing.

Well, in the way which has been described, the

man made love to the woman for a day or two. Then he took her home, and bade her good-by for a time, and told her, in an exaggeratedly formal way, which she understood and smiled at, that he and she must meet each other much oftener in the future. Then he hugged her and went away. And she, being a mother whose heart had hungered, watched his figure as it disappeared, and laughed and cried and was very happy.

"Louisa," said a dignified old lady, "I was mistaken in saying that all happiness from children comes in their youth. It may come in a greater way later—if!"

A TRAGEDY OF THE FOREST

IT is Christmas eve. A man lies stretched on his blanket in a copse in the depths of a black pine forest of the Saginaw Valley. He has been hunting all day, fruitlessly, and is exhausted. So wearied is he with long hours of walking, that he will not even seek to reach the lumbermen's camp, half a mile distant, without a few moment's rest. He has thrown his blanket down on the snow in the bushes, and has thrown himself upon the blanket, where he lies, half dreaming. No thought of danger comes to him. There is slight risk, he knows, even were he to fall asleep, though the deep forests of the Saginaw region are not untenanted. He is in that unexplainable mental condition which sometimes comes with extreme exhaustion. His bodily senses are dulled and wearied, but a phenomenal acuteness has come to those perceptions so hard of definition — partly mental, partly psychological. The man lying in the copse is puzzled at his own condition, but he does not seek to analyze it. He is not a student of such phenomena. He is but a vigorous young backwoodsman, the hunter attached to the camp of lumbermen cutting trees in the vicinity.

The man has lain for some time listlessly, but the feeling which he cannot understand increases now almost to an oppression. He sees nothing, but there is an unusual sensation which alarms him. He recognizes near him a presence—fierce, intense, unnatural. A rustle in the twigs a few feet distant falls upon his ears. He raises his head. What he sees startles and at the same time robs him of all volition. It is not fear. He is armed and is courageous enough. It is something else; some indefinable connection with the object upon which he looks which holds him. There, where it has drawn itself closely and stealthily from its covert in the underbrush, is a huge gray wolf.

The man can see the gaunt figure distinctly, though the somber light is deepening quickly into darkness. He can see the grisly coat, the yellow fangs, the flaming eyes. He can almost feel the hot breath of the beast. But something far more disturbing than that which meets his eye affects him. His own individuality has become obscured and another is taking its place. He struggles against the transformation, but in vain. He can read the wolf's thoughts, or rather its fierce instincts and desires. He is the wolf.

Undoubtedly there exists at times a relation between the souls of human beings. One comprehends the other. There is a transfer of wishes, emotions, impulses. Now something of the same

kind has happened to the man with this dreadful beast. He knows the wolf's heart. The man trembles like one in fear. The perspiration comes in great drops upon his forehead, and his features are distorted. It is a horrible thing. Now a change comes. The wolf moves. He glides off in the darkness. The spell upon the man is weakened, but it is not gone. He staggers to his feet, and half an hour later is in the lumbermen's camp again. But he comes in like one insane—pallid of face and muttering. His comrades, startled by his appearance, ply him with questions, receiving only incoherent answers. They place him in his rude bunk, where he lies writhing and twisting about as under strong excitement. His eyes are staring, as if they must see what those about him cannot see, and his breath comes quickly. He pants like a wild beast. There is reason for it. His thoughts are with the wolf. He is the wolf. The personalities of the ravening brute and of the man are blended now in one, or rather the personality of the man has been eliminated. The man's body is in the lumbermen's camp, but his mind is in the depths of the forest. He is seeking prey!

* * * * *

"I am hungry! I must have warm blood and flesh! The darkness is here, and my time has come. There are no deer to-night in the pine forest on the hill, where I have run them down and torn them. The deep snow has driven them into the

lower forest, where men have been at work. The deer will be feeding to-night on the buds of the trees the men have felled. How I hate men and fear them! They are different from the other animals in the wood. I shun them. They are stronger than I in some way. There is death about them. As I crept by the farm beside the river this morning I saw a young one, a child with yellow hair. Ah, how I would like to feed upon her! Her throat was white and soft. But I dare not rush through the field and seize her. The man was there, and he would have killed me. They are not hungry. The odor of flesh came to me in the wind across the clearing. It was the same way at this time when the snow was deep last year. It is some day on which they feast. But I will feed better. I will have hot blood. The deer are in the tops of the fallen trees now!"

Across frozen streams, gliding like a shadow through the underbrush, swift, silent, with only its gleaming eyes to betray it, the gaunt figure goes. Miles are past. The figure threads its way between the trunks of massive trees. It passes over fallen logs with long, noiseless leaps; it creeps serpent-like beneath the wreck left by a summer "cyclone"; it crosses the barren reaches of oak openings, where the shadows cast by huge pines adjacent mingle in fantastic figures; it casts a shifting shadow itself as it sweeps across some lighter spot, where faint moonbeams find their way to the

ground through overhanging branches. The figure approaches the spot where the lumbermen have been at work. Among the tops of the fallen trees are other figures—light, graceful, flitting about. The deer are feeding on the buds.

The eyes of the long gray figure stealing on grow more flaming still. The yellow fangs are disclosed cruelly. Slowly it creeps forward. It is close upon the flitting figures now. There is a rush, a fierce, hungry yelp, a great leap. There is a crash of twigs and limbs. The flitting figures assume another character; the beautiful deer, wild with fright, bounding away with gigantic springs. The steady stroke of their hoofs echoes away through the forest. In the tree-tops there is a great struggle, and then the sound comes of another series of great leaps dying off in the distance. The prey has escaped. But not altogether! The grisly figure is following. The pace had changed to one of fierce pursuit. It is steady and relentless.

* * * * *

The man in the bunk in the lumbermen's camp half leaps to his feet. His eyes are staring more wildly, his breathing is more rapid. He appears a man in a spasm. His comrades force him to his bed again, but find it necessary to restrain him by sheer strength. They think he has gone mad. But only his body is with them. He is in the forest. His prey has escaped him. He is pursuing it.

* * * * *

"It has escaped me! I almost had it by its slender throat when it shook me off and leaped away. But I will have it yet! I will follow swiftly till it tires and falters, and then I will tear and feed upon it. The old wolf never tires! Leap away, you fool, if you will. I am coming, hungry, never resting. You are mine!"

With the speed of light the deer bounds away in the direction its fellows have taken. Its undulating leaps are like the flight of a bird. The snow crackles as its feet strike the frozen earth and flies off in a white shower. The fallen tree-tops are left behind. Miles are covered. But ever, in the rear, with almost the speed of the flying deer, sweeps along the trailing shadow. It is long past midnight. The moon has risen high, and the bright spots in the forest are more frequent. The deer crosses these with a rush. A few moments later there is in the same place the passage of shadow. Still they are far apart. Will they remain so?

Swiftly between the dark pines again, across frozen streams again, through valleys and over hills, the relentless chase continues. The leaps of the fleeing deer become less vaulting, a look of terror in its liquid eyes has deepened; its tongue projects from its mouth, its wet flanks heave distressfully, but it flies on in desperation. The distance between it and the dark shadow behind has lessened plainly. There is no abatement to the

speed of this silent thing. It follows noiselessly, persistently.

The forest becomes thinner now. The flying deer bounds over a fence of brushwood and suddenly into a sea of sudden light. It is the clearing in the midst of which the farm-house stands. Across the sea of gold made by the moonshine on the field of snow flies the deer, to disappear in the depth of the forest beyond. It has scarcely passed from sight, when emerging from the wood appears the pursuing figure. It is clearly visible now. There are flecks of foam upon the jaws, the lips are drawn back from the sharp fangs, and even the light from above does not dim nor lessen the glare in the hungry eyes. The figure passes along the long bright space. The same scene in the forest beyond, but intensified. The distance between pursuer and pursued is lessening still. The leaps of the deer are weakening now, its quick panting is painful. And the thing behind is rushing along with its thirst for blood increased by its proximity. But the darkness in the forest is disappearing. In the east there is a faint ruddy tinge. It is almost morning.

"I shall have it! It is mine—the weak thing, with its rich, warm blood! Swift of foot as it is, did it think to escape the old wolf? It falters as it leaps. It is faint and tottering. How I will tear it! The day has nearly come. How I hate the

day! But the prey is mine. I will kill it in the gray light."

* * * * *

The man in the bunk in the lumbermen's camp is seized with another spasm. He struggles to escape from his friends, though he does not see them. He is fiercely intent on something. His teeth are set and his eyes glare fiercely. It requires half a dozen men to restrain him.

* * * * *

The deer struggles on, still swiftly but with effort. Its breath comes in agony, its eyes are staring from its sockets. It is a pitiable spectacle. But the struggle for life continues. In its flight the deer had described a circle. Once more the forest becomes less dense, the clearing with the farm-house is reached again. With a last desperate effort the deer vaults over the brushwood fence. The scene has changed again. The morning has broken. The great snowy surface which was a sea of gold has become a sea of silver. The farm-house stands out revealed plainly in the increasing light. With flagging movement the fugitive passes across the field. But there is a sudden, slight noise behind. The deer turns its head. Its pursuer is close upon it. It sees the death which nears it. The monster, sure now of its prey, gives a fierce howl of triumph. Terror lends the victim strength. It turns toward the farm-house; it struggles through the banks of snow; it leaps the

low palings, where, beside great straw-stacks, the cattle of the farm are herded It disappears among them.

The door of the farm-house opens, and from it comes a man who strides away toward where the cattle are gathered, lowing for their morning feed. After the man there emerges from the door a little girl with yellow hair. The child laughs aloud as she looks over the field of snow, with its myriads of crystals flashing out all colors under the rays of the morning sun. She dances along the footpath in a direction opposite that taken by the man. Not far distant, creeping along a deep furrow, is a lank, skulking figure.

"Can it be? Has it escaped me, when it was mine? I would have torn it at the farm-house door but that the man appeared. Must I hunger for another day, when I am raging for blood! What is that? It is the child, and alone! It has wandered away from the farm-house. Where is the great hound that guards the house at night? Oh, the child! I can see its white throat again. I will tear it. I will throttle the weak thing and still its cries in an instant!"

* * * * *

The man in the bunk in the lumbermen's camp is wild again. His comrades struggle to hold him down.

* * * * *

A horrible, hairy thing, with flaming eyes and

hot breath, which leaps upon and bears down a child with yellow hair. A hoarse growl, the rush of a great hound, a desperate struggle in the snow, and the still air of morning is burdened suddenly with wild clamor. There is an opening of doors, there are shouts and calls and flying footsteps; and then, mingling with the cries of the writhing brutes, rings out sharply the report of the farmer's rifle. There is a howl of rage and agony, and a gaunt gray figure leaps upward and falls quivering across the form of the child. The child is lifted from the ground unhurt. The great hound has by the throat the old wolf—dead!

* * * * *

The man in the lumbermén's camp has leaped from his bunk. His appearance is something ghastly. His comrades spring forward to restrain him, but he throws them off. There is a furious struggle with the madman. He has the strength of a dozen men. The sturdy lumbermen at last gain the advantage over him. Suddenly he throws up his hands and pitches forward upon the floor of the shanty—dead.

They could never understand—the simple lumbermen—why the life of the merry, light-hearted hunter of the party came to an end so suddenly on the eve of Christmas Day. He was well the day before, they said, in perfect health, but he went mad on the eve of Christmas Day, and in the morning died.

THE PARASANGS

MY friends, the Parasangs, both died last week. Mr. Parasang was carried off by a slight attack of pneumonia as dust is wiped away by a cloth, and Mrs. Parasang followed him within three days. He was in life a rather energetic man, and she always lagged a little behind him when they went abroad walking together, keeping pretty close to him, notwithstanding. So it was in death. It was the shock of the thing, they say, that killed her, she lacking any great strength; but to me it seems to have been chiefly force of habit and the effect of what romantic people call being in love. She was in love with her husband, as he had been with her. And what was the use of staying here, he gone?

They were buried together, and I was one of the pall-bearers at the double funeral; indeed, I was the directing spirit, having been so connected with the Parasangs that I was their close friend, and the person to whom every one naturally turned in the adjustment of matters concerning them. When Mr. Parasang died, the first instinct of his wife was to tell them to send for me, and when I reached their home—for I was absent from the city

—I found that she had clung to and followed him as usual, as he liked it to be. It was what he lived for as long as he could live at all.

They had ordered a fine coffin for Parasang, and when I came he was lying in it. Mrs. Parasang was lying where she had died, in bed. And they had ordered another fine coffin for her. (Of course, when I refer to the bodies as Mr. and Mrs. Parasang it must be understood that I consider only the earthly tenements, for I am a religious man.) I did not like it. I went to the undertaker and asked him if he could not make a coffin for two. He answered that it was somewhat of an unusual order, that there were styles and fashions in coffins just as there are in shoes and hats and things of that sort, and that it would be a difficult work for him to accomplish, in addition to being most expensive. I did not argue with him at all, for I knew he had the advantage of me. I am not an expert in coffins, and, of course, could not meet him upon his own ground. If it had been the purchase of a horse or gun or dog, or a new typewriting machine, it would have been an altogether different thing.

I simply told the undertaker to go ahead and make such a coffin as I had ordered, regardless of expense. I wanted it softly cushioned, and I told him not to make it unnecessarily wide. I wanted them side by side, with their faces turned upward, of course, so that we could all have a fair last look at them, but I wanted them so close together that

they would be touching from head to foot. I wanted it so that when they became dust and bone all would be mingled, and that even the hair, which does not decay for some centuries, which grows, you know, after death, would be all twined together.

The undertaker followed my instructions, for undertakers get to be as mechanical as shoemakers or ticket-sellers; but the relations of the Parasangs and close friends at home thought it an odd thing to have done. I overrode them and had things all my own way, for I knew I was right. I knew the Parasangs better than any one else. I knew what they would have me do were communications between us still possible.

There was something so odd about the love story of the Parasangs that it always interested me. It made me laugh, but I was in full sympathy with them, though sympathy was something of which they were not in need. The queer thing about it was their age.

Mr. Parasang and I were cronies. We were cronies despite the number of years which had elapsed since our respective births. He was seventy-eight. Mrs. Parasang was seventy-five. And they had been married but two years. I knew Mr. Parasang before the wedding, and it was because of my close intimacy with him that I came to know the relations between the two and the story of it. I was just forty years his junior.

I can't understand why the man died so easily. He was such a vigorous-looking person for his age, and seemed in such perfect health. He was one of your apparently strong, gray-mustached old men, and did not look to be more than sixty-five at most. His wife, I think, was really stronger than he, though she did not appear so young. It is often that way with women. The attack of pneumonia which came upon Parasang was not, the doctors told me, vicious enough to overthrow an ordinary man. I suppose it was merely that this man's life capital had run out. There is a great deal in heredity. Sometimes I think that each child is born with just such a capital and vitality, something which could be represented in figures if we knew how to do it; and that, though it is affected to an extent by ways of living, the amount of capital determines, within certain limits, to a certainty how long its possessor will do business on this round lump of earth. I think Parasang's time for liquidation had come. That is all. As for Mrs. Parasang, I think she could have stayed a little longer if she had cared to do so, but she went away because he had gone. One can just lie down and die sometimes.

I have drifted away from what I was going to say—this problem of dying always attracts—but I will try to get back to the subject proper. I was going to tell of the odd love story of the Parasangs, or at least what struck me as odd, because, as I

have said, of their ages. There is nothing in it particular aside from that.

A little less than fifty years ago—that must have been about when Taylor was President—Parasang was engaged to marry a girl of whom he was very fond, and who was very fond of him. Well, these two, much in love, and just suited to each other, must needs have a difference of the sort known as a lovers' quarrel. That in itself was nothing to speak of, for most lovers, being young and fools, do the same thing. But it so happened that these two, being also high-spirited, carried the difference farther than is usual with smitten, callow males and females, and let the breach widen until they separated, as they thought, finally. And she married in course of time, and so did he. It's a way people have; a way more or less good or bad, according to circumstances. She lived with a commonplace husband until he died and left her a widow, aged sixty or thereabout. Mr. Parasang's wife died about the same time. What sort of a woman she was I do not know. I remember the old gentleman told me once that she was an excellent housekeeper and had the gift of talking late o' nights. I could not always tell what Parasang meant when he said things. He was one of the sort of old gentlemen who leave much to be inferred.

Parasang had drifted here, and was a reasonably well-to-do man. His old sweetheart had come also

because her late husband had made an investment here, and she found it to her interest to live where her income was mostly earned. Neither knew how near the other was, and the years passed by. Eventually the two met by an accident of the sheerest kind. Possibly they had almost forgotten each other, though I don't think that is so. They met among mutual friends, and—there they were. I have often wondered how it must seem to meet after half a century. There is something about the brain which makes the reminiscences fresh to one sometimes, but of an early love story it must be like a dream to the aged. Something uncertain and vaguely sweet. Just think of it—half a century, more than one generation, had passed since these two had met. Their old love story must have seemed to them something all unreal, something they had but read long ago in a book.

Parasang was a large man, but Mrs. Blood—that was now his old sweetheart's name—was a small woman. Her hair was nearly white when I met her, but from the color of a few unchanged strands of it, I imagine that it must have been red when she was young. Maybe that was why the lovers' quarrel of over fifty years ago had been so spirited. She was both spirited and charming, even at seventy-two, and at twenty must have been a fascinating woman. Parasang was doubtless himself a striking person when he was young. I have already said what he was like in his old age. Both

the man and woman had retained the personal regard for themselves which is so pleasant in old people, and Mrs. Blood was still as dainty as could be, in her trim gowns, generally of some fluffy black or silvery gray material, and Parasang was as strong and wholesome looking as an ox. I shall always regret that I was not present when they met. A study of their faces then would have been worth while.

Parasang once told me about this second wooing of his wife—and it was droll. There seemed nothing funny about it to him. He said that after being introduced to Mrs. Blood, and recognizing her in an instant after all those years, as she did him, they sat down on a sofa together, being left to entertain each other, as the two oldest people in the room; and that he uttered a few commonplace sentences, and she replied gently in the same vein for a little time; and that then each stopped talking, and that they sat there quietly gazing at each other. And he said that somehow, looking into her eyes, even with the delicate glasses on them, the earth seemed to be slipping away, and there was the girl he had known and loved again beside him; and then the years passed by in another direction, only more slowly. And the girl seemed to get a little older and a little older, and the hair changed and the cheeks fell a little at the sides just below the mouth, you know, and there came crow's feet at the outer corners of her eyes, and wrinkles

across her neck, but that nothing of all this physical happening ever changed one iota the real look of her, the look which is from the heart of a woman when a man has once really known her. And so the years glided over their course, she changing a little with each, yet never really changing at all, until it came again up to the present moment, with her beside him on the sofa, real and tangible, just as he would have her in every way.

"I don't suppose you can understand it," he said, "for you are only a boy in such things yet" (those old fellows call everything under fifty a boy); "but I tell you it is a wonderful thing to know what a love is that can come out of the catacombs, so to speak, and be all itself again," and he said this as jauntily as if I, being so young, couldn't know anything about the proper article, as far as sentiment was concerned.

They sat there on the sofa, he said, still silent and looking at each other. At last, when he had fully realized it all, he spoke.

"I knew that you were a widow, Jennie, but I did not know that you were living here."

She explained that she had been in the city for some time and the reason of it, and then the conversation lagged again; and they were very much like two young people at a children's party, save that they were dreaming rather than embarrassed, and that, I suppose, they felt the dry germ of another age seeking the air and the sunshine of

living. You know they have found grains of wheat in the Egyptian mummy cases, which were laid away over three thousand years ago, and that these grains of wheat, under the new conditions, have sprouted and grown and shot up green stalks and borne plump seeds again. And the love of Mr. and Mrs. Parasang has always reminded me of the mummy wheat.

They talked a little of old friends and of old times, but their talk was not all unconstrained, because, you see, they couldn't refer to those former times and scenes without recalling, involuntarily, some day or some hour when they two were together, and when there seemed a chain between their hearts which nothing in the world could break. It was an awful commentary on the quality of human love and human pledges that things should be as they had been and as they were. It was a reflection, in a sense, on each of them. How hollow had been everything—and it was all their fault.

They both kept looking at each other, and when they parted he asked if he might call upon her, and she assented quietly. He called next day, and found her all alone, for a niece who lived with her had gone away; and they became, he said, a little more at ease. And then began the most delicate of all wooings. I met them sometimes then and guessed at it, though as yet Parasang had not told me the story. He was more considerate, I imagine,

than he had been in youth, and she, it may be, less exacting. It was a mellow relationship, yet with a shyness that was amazing. They were drifting together upon soft waves of memory, yet wondering at the happening.

And one day he asked her if she would be his wife. She had known, of course—a woman always knows—but she blushed and looked up at him, and tears came into her eyes.

And he thought of the time, so long ago, when he had asked her the same question. He could not help it. And somehow she did not seem less. He thought only of how foolish they had been to throw away a heritage of belonging to each other; and then he thought of how the man, the protector, the guardian of both, should have taken the broader view and have been above all pettishness and have yielded for the sake of both. She would not have thought more lightly of him. She would have understood some day. For the lost past he blamed himself alone.

She answered him at last, but it was not as she had answered once. She spoke sweetly and bravely of their age and of the uselessness of it all now, and of what people would say, and of other things. But her eyes were just as loving as when his hair was dark.

And when she had said all those things he did what made me like him. There was good stuff in Parasang. He merely took her in his arms. Fur-

thermore, he told her when they would be married. And I was at the wedding on that day.

It was six months later when I got the habit of dining with them pretty regularly and of calling for Parasang on my way down town in the morning. She came into the hall with him, as do young wives, and kissed him good-by, and it pleased and interested me amazingly. The outlines of their mouths were not the same as they were half a century ago, and as he bent over her I thought each time of—

> "And their spirits rushed together
> At the meeting of the lips";

and it would occur to me queerly that spirits had but slender causeway there. I was mistaken, though. I learned that later.

There was but this variation between the early wedded life of this aged pair and of what would possibly have happened had they married young. There were no differences and no "makings-up." It was a pleasant stream—I knew it would be—but the volume of it surprised me.

That is all. There is no plot to the story of what I know of these dear friends of mine whom I cannot see now. And it was but because of what I have told that I had them buried as they were. There was nothing, from the ordinary standpoint, which justified my course in overrunning those other people who would have buried the two apart; but I believe myself that one should, within reason, seek to gratify the fancies of one's closest friends.

LOVE AND A TRIANGLE

A MAN came out of a mine, looked about him, inhaled the odor from the stunted spruce trees, looked up at the clear skies, then called to a boy idling in a shed at a little distance from the mine buildings, telling him to bring out the horse and buckboard. The name of the man who had issued from the mine was Julius Corbett, and he was a civil engineer. Furthermore, he was a capitalist.

He was an intelligent looking man of about thirty-five, and a resolute looking one, this Julius Corbett, and as he stood waiting for the buckboard, was rather worth seeing, vigorous of frame, clear of eye and bronzed by a summer's work in a wild country. The shaft from which he had just emerged was that of a silver mine not five miles distant from Black Bay, one of the inlets of the northern shore of Lake Superior, and was a most valuable property, of which he was chief owner. He had inherited from an uncle in Canada a few hundred acres of land in this region, but had scarcely considered it worthy the payment of its slight taxes until some of the many attempts at mining in the region had proved successful, and it

was shown that the famous Silver Islet, worked out years ago in Lake Superior, was not the only repository thereabouts of the precious metal. Then he had abandoned for a time the practice of his profession—he had an office in Chicago—and had visited what he referred to lightly as his "British possessions." He had found rich indications, had called in mining experts, who confirmed all he had imagined, and had returned to Chicago and organized a company. There was a monotonous success to the undertaking, much at variance with the story of ordinary mining enterprises. Corbett had become a very rich man within two years; he was worth more than a million, and was becoming richer daily. He was, seemingly, a person much to be envied, and would not himself, on the day here referred to, have denied such imputation, for he was in love with an exceedingly sweet and clever girl, and knew that he had won this same charming creature's heart. They were plighted to each other, but the date of their marriage was not yet fixed. He had closed up his business at the mine for the season, and was now about to hasten to Chicago, where the day of so much importance to him would be fixed upon and the sum of his good fortune soon made complete. This was in September, 1898.

It was not a commonplace girl whom Corbett was to marry. On the contrary, she was exceptionally gifted, and a young woman whose cleverness had

been supplemented by an elaborate education. There was, however, running through her character a vein of what might be called emotionalism. The habit of concentration, acquired through study, seemed rather to intensify this quality than otherwise. Perhaps it made even greater her love for Corbett, but it was destined to perplex him.

In September the air is crisp along the route from Black Bay to Duluth, and from that through fair Wisconsin to Chicago, and Corbett's spirits were high throughout the journey. Was he not to meet Nell Morrison, in his estimation the sweetest girl on earth? Was he not soon to possess her entirely and for a permanency? He made mental pictures of the meeting, and drifted into a lover's mood of planning. Out of his wealth what a home he would provide for her, and how he would gratify her gentle whims! Even her astronomical fancy, Vassar-born, should become his own, and there should be an observatory to the house. He had a weakness for astronomy himself, and was glad his wife-to-be had the same taste intensified. They would study the heavens together from a heaven of their own. What was wealth good for anyhow, save to make happy those we love?

The train sped on, and Chicago was reached, and very soon thereafter was reached the home of the Morrisons. Corbett could not complain of his reception. The one creature was there, sweet as a woman may be, eager to meet him, and with ten-

derness and steadfastness shown in every line of her pretty face. They spent a charming day and evening together, and he was content. Once or twice, just for a moment, the young woman seemed abstracted, but it was only for a moment, and the lover thought little of the circumstance. He was happy when he bade her good-night. "To-morrow, dear," said he, "we will talk of something of greatest importance to me, of importance to us both." She blushed and made no answer for a second. Then she said that she loved him dearly, and that what affected one must affect the other, and that she would look for him very early in the afternoon. He went to his hotel buoyant. The world was good to him.

When Corbett called at the Morrison mansion the next day he entered without ringing, as was his habit, and went straight to the library, expecting to find Nell there. He was disappointed, but there were traces of her recent presence. There was an astronomical map open upon the table, and books and reviews lay all about, each open, with a marker indicating a special page. A little glove lay upon the floor, and Corbett picked it up and kissed it.

He summoned a servant and sent upstairs to announce his presence; then turned instinctively to note what branch of her favorite study was now attracting his sweetheart's attention. He picked up one of the open reviews, an old one by the

way, and read a marked passage there. It was as follows:

"It will always be more difficult for us to communicate with the people of Mars than to receive signals from them, because of our position and phases. It is the nocturnal terrestrial hemisphere that is turned toward the planet Mars in the periods when we approach most nearly to it, and it shows us in full its lighted hemisphere. But communication is possible."

He looked at a map. It was a great chart of the surface of Mars, made by the famous Italian Schiaparelli, and he looked at more of the reviews and found ever the same subject considered in the marked articles. All related to Mars. He was puzzled but delighted. "The dear girl has a hobby," he thought. "Well, she shall enjoy it to the utmost."

Nelly entered the room. Her face lighted up with pleasure when she met her fiancé, but assumed a more thoughtful look as she saw what he was reading. She welcomed him, though, as kindly as any lover could demand, and he, of course, was joyously content. "Still an astronomer, I see," he said, "and apparently with a specialty. I see nothing but Mars, all Mars! Have you become infatuated with a single planet, to the neglect of all the others? I like it, though. We will study Mars together."

Her face brightened. "I am so glad!" she said.

"I have studied nothing else for months. It has been so almost from the day you left us. And it is not Mars alone I am studying; it is the great problem of communication with the people there. Oh, Julius, it is possible, and the idea is something wonderful! Just think what would follow! It would be the beginning of an understanding between reasoning creatures of the whole universe!"

He said that it was something wonderful, indeed, maybe only a dream, but a very fascinating one.

"Oh, it is no dream," she answered. "It is a glorious possibility. Why, just think of it, we know, positively know, that Mars is inhabited. Think of what has been discovered. It was perceived years ago that Mars was intersected by canals, evidently made by human — I suppose that's the word—human beings. They run from the extremes of ocean bays to the extremes of other ocean bays, and connect, too, the many lakes there. Nature does not make such lines. They are of equal width, those canals, throughout their whole length, and Schiaparelli has even watched them in construction. First there is a dark line, as if the earth had been disturbed, and then it becomes bright when the water is let in. Sometimes, too, double canals are made there close to each other, running side by side, as if one were used for travel and transportation in one direction and one in another. And there are many other things as

wonderful. The world of Mars is like our own. There are continents and seas and islands there—it is not a dead, dry surface like the moon—and it has clouds and rains and snows and seasons, just as we have, and of the same intensity as ours. Oh, Julius, we *must* communicate with them!"

"But, my dear, that implies equal interest on their part. How do we know them to be intelligent enough?"

"Why, there are the canals. They must be reasoners in Mars. Besides, how do we know but that they far surpass us in all learning? Mars is much older in one way than the Earth, far more advanced in its planet life, and why should not its people, through countless ages of advantage, have become wiser than we? Whatever their form, they may be superior to us in every way. We are to them, too, something which must have been studied for thousands of years. The Earth, you know, is to the people on Mars a most brilliant object. It is the most glorious object in their sky, a star of the first magnitude. Oh, be sure their astronomers are watching us with all interest!"

And Corbett, dazed, replied that he was overwhelmed with so much learning in one so fair, that he was very proud of her, but that there was one subject on his mind, compared to which communication with Mars or any other planet was but a trifle. And he wanted to talk with her concerning what was closest to his heart. It was the one

great question in the world to him. It was, when should be their wedding day?

The girl looked at him blushingly, then paled. "Let us not talk of that to-day," she said, at length. "I know it isn't right; I know that I seem unkind—but—oh, Julius! come to-morrow and we will talk about it." And she began crying.

He could not understand. Her demeanor was all incomprehensible to him, but he tried to soothe her, and told her she had been studying too hard and that her nerves were not right. She brightened a little, but was still distrait. He left, with something in his heart like a vengeful feeling toward the planets, and toward Mars in particular.

When Corbett returned next day the girl was in the library awaiting him. Her demeanor did not relieve him. He feared something indefinable. She was sad and perplexed of countenance, but more self-possessed than on the day before. She spoke softly: "Now we will talk of what you wished to yesterday."

He pleaded as a lover will, pleaded for an early day, and gave a hundred reasons why it should be so, and she listened to him, not apathetically, but almost sadly. When he concluded, she said, very quietly:

"Did you ever read that queer story by Edmond About called 'The Man with the Broken Ear'?"

He answered, wonderingly, in the affirmative.

"Well, dear" she said, "do you remember how

absorbed, so that it was a very part of her being, the heroine of that story became in the problem of reviving the splendid mummy? She forgot everything in that, and could not think of marriage until the test was made and its sequel satisfactory. She was not faithless; she was simply helpless under an irresistible influence. I'm afraid, love"—and here the tears came into her eyes—"that I'm like that heroine. I care for you, but I can think only of the people in Mars. Help me. You are rich. You have a million dollars, and will soon have more. Reach those people!"

He was shocked and disheartened. He pleaded the probable utter impracticability of such an enterprise. He might as well have talked to a statue. It all ended with an outburst on her part.

"Talk with the Martians," said she, "and the next day I will become your wife!"

He left the house a most unhappy man. What could he do? He loved the girl devotedly, but what a task had she given him! Then, later, came other reflections. After all, the end to be attained was a noble one, and he could, in a measure, sympathize with her wild desire. The lover in "The Man With a Broken Ear" had at least occasion for a little jealousy. His own case was not so bad. He could not well be jealous of an entire population of a distant planet. And to what better use could a portion of his wealth be put than in the

advancement of science! The idea grew upon him. He would make the trial!

He was rewarded the next day when he told his fiancée what he had decided upon. She was wildly delighted. "I love you more than ever now!" she declared, "and I will work with you and plan with you and aid you all I can. And," she added, roguishly, "remember that it is not all for my sake. If you succeed you will be famous all over the world, and besides there'll come some money back to you. There is the reward of one hundred thousand francs left in 1892 by Madame Guzman to any one who should communicate with the people of another planet."

He responded, of course, that he was impelled to effort only by the thought of hastening a wedding day, and then he went to his office and wrote various letters to various astronomers. His friend Marston, professor of astronomy in the University of Chicago, he visited in person. He was not a laggard, this Julius Corbett, in anything he undertook.

Then there was much work.

Marston, being an astronomer, believed in vast possibilities. Being a man of sense, he could advise. He related to Corbett all that had been suggested in the past for interstellar communication. He told of the suggested advice of making figures in great white roads upon some of Earth's vast plains, but dismissed the idea as too costly and

not the best. "We have a new agent now," he said. "There is electricity. We must use that. And the figures must, of course, be geometrical. Geometry is the same throughout all the worlds that are or have been or ever will be."

And there was much debate and much correspondence and an exhibition of much learning, and one day Corbett left Chicago. His destination was Buenos Ayres, South America.

The Argentine Republic, since its financial troubles early in the decade, had been in a complaisant and conciliating mood toward all the world, and Corbett had little difficulty in his first step—that of securing a concession for stringing wires in any designs which might suit him upon the vast pampas of the interior. It was but stipulated that the wires should be raised at intervals, that herding might not be interfered with. He had already made a contract with one of the great electric companies. The illuminated figures were to be two hundred miles each in their greatest measurement, and were to be as follows:

It was found advisable, later, to dispense with the last two, and so, only the square, equilateral triangle, circle and right-angled triangle, it was decided should be made. The work was hurried forward with all the impetus of native energy,

practically unlimited money and the power of love. This last is a mighty force.

And great works were erected, with vast generators, and thousands and thousands of miles of sheets of wires were strung close together, until each system, when illuminated, would make a broad band of flame surrounding the defined area. From the darkened surface of the Earth, at the time when the Earth approached Mars most nearly, would blaze out to the Martians the four great geometrical figures. The test was made at last. All that had been hoped for in the way of an effort was attained. All along the lines of those great figures, night in the Argentine Republic was turned into glorious day. From balloons the spectacle was something incomparably magnificent. All was described in a thousand letters. A host of correspondents were there, and accounts of the undertaking and its progress were sent all over the civilized world. Each night the illumination was renewed, and all the world waited. Months passed.

Corbett had returned to Chicago. He could do no more. He could only await the passage of time, and hope. He was not very buoyant now. His sweetheart was full of the tenderest regard, but was in a condition of feverish unrest. He was alarmed regarding her, so great appeared her anxiety and so tense the strain upon her nerves. He could not help her, and prepared to return again to a season at his mine.

The man was sitting in his room one night in a gloomy frame of mind. What a fool he had been! He had but yielded to a fancy of a dreaming girl, and put her even farther away from him while wasting half a fortune! He would be better on the rugged shore of Lake Superior, where the moods of men were healthy, and where were pure air and the fragrance of the pines. There was a strong pull at his bell.

A telegraph boy entered, and this was on the message he bore:

Come to the observatory at once. Important.

MARSTON.

To seek a cab, to be whirled away at a gallop to the university, to burst into Marston in his citadel, required but little time. The professor was walking up and down excitedly.

"It has come! All the world knows it!" he shouted as Corbett entered, and he grasped him by the hand and wrung it hardly.

"What has come?" gasped the visitor.

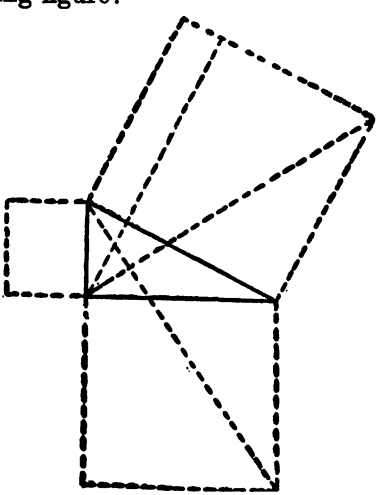
"What has come, man! All we had hoped for or dreamed of—and more! Why, look! Look for yourself!"

He dragged Corbett to the eye-piece of the great telescope and made him look. What the man saw made him stagger back, overcome with an emotion which for the moment did not allow him speech. What he saw upon the surface of the planet Mars was a duplication of the glittering figures on the

pampas of the South American Republic. They were in lines of glorious light, between what appeared bands of a darker hue, provided, apparently, to make them more distinct, and even at such vast distance, their effect was beautiful. And there was something more, a figure he could not comprehend at first, one not in the line of the others, but above. "What is it—that added outline?" he cried.

"What is it! Look again. You'll determine quickly enough! Study it!" roared out Marston, and Corbett did as he was commanded. Its meaning flashed upon him.

There, just above the representation of the right-angled triangle, shone out, clearly and distinctly, this striking figure:



What could it mean? Ah, it required no profound mathematician, no veteran astronomer, to answer such a question! A schoolboy would be equal to the task. The man of Mars might have no physical resemblance to the man of Earth, the people of Mars might resemble our elephants or have wings, but the eternal laws of mathematics and of logic must be the same throughout all space. Two and two make four, and a straight line is the shortest distance between two points throughout the universe. And by adding this figure to the others represented, the Martians had said to the people of Earth as plainly as could have been done in written words of one of our own languages:

Yes, we understand. We know that you are trying to communicate with us, or with those upon some other world. We reply to you, and we show to you that we can reason by indicating that the square of the hypothenuse of a right-angled triangle is equivalent to the sum of the squares of the other two sides. Hope to hear from you further.

There was the right-angled triangle, its lines reproduced in unbroken brilliancy, and there were the added lines used in the familiar demonstration, broken at intervals to indicate their use. The famous *pons asinorum* had become the bridge between two worlds.

Corbett could scarcely speak as yet. Telegraph messengers came rushing in with dispatches from all quarters—from the universities of Michi-

gan and California, and Yale and Harvard, and from Rochester and all over the United States. Cablegrams from England, France, Germany and Italy and other regions of the world but repeated the same wonderful observation, the same conclusion: "They have answered! We have talked with them!"

Corbett returned to his home in a semi-delirium. He had the wisdom, though it was midnight, to send to Nelly the brief message, "Good news," to prepare her in a degree for what the morning papers would reveal. He slept but fitfully. And it was at an early hour when he called upon his fiancée and found her awaiting him in the library.

She said nothing as he entered, but he had scarcely crossed the threshold when he found his arms full of something very tangible and warm, and pulsing with all love. It has been declared by thoughtful and learned people that there is no sensation in the world more delightful than may be produced by just this means, and Corbett's demeanor under the circumstances was such as to indicate the soundness of the assertion. He was a very happy man.

And she, as soon as she could speak at all, broke out, impulsively:

"Oh, dear, isn't it glorious! I knew you would succeed. And aren't you glad I imposed the hard condition? It was hard, I know, and I seemed unloving, but I believed, and I could not have given

you up even if you had failed. I should have told you so very soon. I may confess that now. And—I will marry you any day you wish."

She blushed magnificently as she concluded, and the face of a pretty women, so suffused, is a pleasing thing to see.

Of course, within a week the name of Corbett became familiar in every corner of the civilized globe, the incentive which had spurred him on became somehow known, and the romance of it but added to his fame, and a few days later, when his wedding occurred, it was chronicled as never had a wedding been before. They made two columns of it even in the far-away Tokio *Gazette*, the Bombay *Times* and the Novgorod *News*. But the social feature was nothing; the scientific world was all aflame.

We had talked with Mars indeed, but of what avail was it if we could not resume the conversation? What next step should be taken in the grand march of knowledge, in the scientific conquest of the universe? Never in all history had there been such a commotion among the learned. Corbett and his gifted wife were early ranked among the eager, for he soon became as much of an enthusiast as she—in fact, since the baby, he is even more so—and derived much happiness from their mutual study and speculation. All theories were advanced from all countries, and suggestions, wise and otherwise, came from thousands of sources.

And so in the year 1900 the thing remains. As inscrutable to us have been the curious symbols appearing upon Mars of late as have apparently been to them a sign language attempted on the pampas. It is now proposed to show to them the outline of a gigantic man, and if Providence has seen fit to make reasoning beings in all worlds something alike, this may prove another bit of progress in the intercourse, but all is in doubt.

Given, the problem of two worlds, millions of miles apart, the people of which are seeking to establish a regular communication with each other, each already acknowledging the efforts of the other, how shall the great feat be accomplished? Will the solution of the vast problem come from a greater utilization of electricity and a further knowledge of what is astral magnetism? There have been, of late, some wonderful revelations along that line. Or will the sign language be worked out upon the planets' surfaces? Who can tell? Certainly all effort has been stimulated, in one world at least. The rewards offered by various governments and individuals now aggregate over five million dollars, and all this money is as nothing to the fame awaiting some one. Who will gain the mighty prize? Who will solve the new problem of the ages?

AN EASTER ADMISSION

THIS is not, strictly speaking, an Easter tale, nor a love story. It is merely the truthful account of certain incidents of a love affair culminating one Easter Day. It may be relied upon. I am familiar with the facts, and I want to say here that if there be any one who thinks he could relate similar facts more exactly—I will admit that he might do the relation in much better form—he is either mistaken or else an envious person with a bad conscience. I am going to tell that which I know simply as it occurred.

There is a friend of mine who is somewhat more than ordinarily well-to-do, who is about thirty years of age, and who lives ordinarily in the city of Chicago. Furthermore, he is a gentleman of education, not merely of the school and university, but of the field and wood. He knows the birds and beasts, and delights in what is wild. Four or five years ago he purchased a tract of land studded closely with hardwood trees, chiefly the beech and hard maple, and criss-crossed by swift-flowing creeks of cold water. This tract of land was not far from the northern apex of the southern peninsula of the State of Michigan. There were ruffed

grouse in the woods, in the creeks were speckled trout in abundance, and my friend rioted among them. He had built him a house in the wilderness; a great house of logs, forty or fifty feet long and thirty wide, with chambers above, with a great fireplace in it, with bunks in one great room for men, and with an apartment better furnished for ladies, should any ever be brought into the wilderness to learn the ways of nature.

Two years ago my friend gave his first house party, and the duration of it included Easter Day, and so was, necessarily, in a happy season. It is pleasant for us in this northern temperate zone that the day, with all its glorious promises, in a spiritual sense, is as full of promise also in the physical sense, in that it corresponds with the awakening of nature and the renewed life of that which so makes humanity. It is a good thing, too, that since the date of Easter Day is among those known as "movable," it means the real spring, but a little farther north or farther south, as the years come and go. So it chanced that the Easter Day referred to came in the northern peninsula of Lower Michigan just when the buds upon the trees showed well defined against one of the bluest skies of all the world, when the teeming currents of the creeks were lifting the ice, and the waters were becoming turbulent to the eye; when the sapsuckers and creeping birds were jubilant, and the honk of the wild goose was a passing thing; when, with

the upspring of the rest of nature, the trees threw off their lethargy, and through the rugged maples the sap began to course again. It was only a few days before Easter that my friend—his name was Hayes, "Jack" Hayes, we called him, though his name, of course, was John—had an inspiration.

Jack knew that so far as his own domain was concerned the time had arrived for the making of maple sugar, and there was promise in the making there, for the wilderness was still virgin. He decided that he would have a regular "sugar-camp" in the midst of his "sugar-bush," and that there should be much making of maple syrup and sugar, with all the attendant festivities common formerly to areas farther south—and here comes an explanation.

Not many months before, this friend of mine had done what men had done often—that is, he fell in love, and with great violence. He fell in love with a stately young woman from St. Louis, a Miss Lennox, who was visiting in Chicago; a girl from the city where what is known as "society" is old and generally clean; where the water which is drunk leaves a clayey substance all round the glass when you partake of it, and which is about the best water in the world; where the colonels who drink whisky are such expert judges of the quality of what they consume that they live far longer than do steady drinkers in other regions; where the word of the business man is good, and where the

women are fair to look upon. To a sugar-making Jack had decided to invite this young woman, with a party made up from both cities.

The party as composed was an admirable one of a dozen people, men and women who could endure a wholesome though somewhat rugged change, and of varying fancies and ages. There were as many men as women, but four were oldsters and married people, and of these two were a rector and his wife. It was an eminently proper but cheerful group, and the rector was the greatest boy of all. We tried to teach him how to shoot white rabbits, but abandoned the task finally, out of awful apprehension for ourselves. Had the reverend gentleman's weapon been a bell-mouth, some of us would assuredly have been slain. We were having a jolly time, our host furnishing, possibly, the one exception.

Of the wooing of Hayes it cannot be said that it had prospered altogether to his liking. Possibly he had been too reticent. He was a languid fellow in speech, anyhow, and, excellent woodsman as he was, generally languid in his movements. There was vigor enough underneath this exterior, but only his intimates knew that. The lady had been gracious, certainly, and she must have seen in his eyes, as women can see so well, that he was in love with her, and that a proposal was impending; but she had not given him the encouragement he wanted. Now he was determined to stake his chances. There was to be a visit one forenoon to

the place where the sugar-making was in progress, and he asked her to go with him ahead of the others, that he might show her how full the forest was of life at all times. He had resolved. He was going to ask her to be his wife.

There was written upon the white sheet of freshly fallen snow the story of the night and morning, of the comedies and tragedies and adventures of the wild things. Their tracks were all about. Here the grouped paws of the rabbits had left their distinct markings as the animals had fed and frolicked among the underwood; and there, over by the group of evergreens, a little mass of leaves and fur showed where the number of the frolickers had been decreased by one when the great owl of the north dropped fiercely upon his prey; there showed the neat tracks of the fox beside the coverts. The twin pads of the mink were clearly defined upon the snow-covered ice which bordered the tumbling creek, and at times the tracks diverged in exploration of the recesses of some brush heap. Little difference made it to the mink whether his prey were bird or woodmouse. Far into the morning, evidently, his hunting had extended, for his track in one place was along that of the ruffed grouse; and the signs showed that he had almost reached his prey, for a single brown black-banded tail-feather lay upon the wing-swept snow, where it could be seen the bird had risen almost as the leap came. The sun was shining,

and squirrel tracks were along the whitened crest of every log, and the traces of jay and snowbird were quite as numerous. There was clamor in the tree-tops. The musical and merry "chickadee-dee-dee" of the tamest of the birds of winter and the somewhat sadder note of the wood pewee mingled with the occasional caw of a crow, the shrill cry of a jay, or the tapping of woodpeckers upon the boles of dead trees. A flock of snow-bunting fluttered and fed in a patch of dry seed-laden weeds. Even the creek was full of life, for there could be seen the movements of creeping things upon its bottom, while through the clear waters trout and minnow flashed brilliantly. There were odors in the air. There was evidence everywhere that spring was real; and it occurred to Jack, as the two walked along and he read aloud to her the night's tale told upon the snow, that the poet who insisted that in the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love quite understood his business; not that it really required spring in his own case, but the season seemed at least to accentuate his emotions. He wondered if young women were affected the same way. He hoped so. At present his courage failed him.

They reached the "sugar-bush" proper, and wandered about among the big maples. They drank the sweet sap from the troughs, and finally settled themselves down comfortably upon one of

the rude benches which had been placed about the fire, over which the kettles boiled steadily, under the watchful eye of an old sugar-maker, whose chief occupation was to lower into the bubbling surface a piece of raw pork attached by a string to a rod whenever the sap showed signs of boiling over. Others of the house party soon joined them. The sun had come out brightly now, and luncheon, brought from the house, was eaten and enjoyed. Then followed more rambling about the wood. The ground showed bare where the snow had melted on an occasional sandy knoll, and there was a search for wintergreen leaves. It was announced that all must be at the house again in time for an early dinner, since the great work of "sugaring-off" was to be the event of the night. It was then that Jack suggested to Miss Lennox that they go by another path of which he knew, but which he had not lately tried. The remainder of the party took the old route, and so the two made the journey once more alone. The man was resolved again. It was three o'clock in the afternoon now, and about as pleasant a day as any upon which man ever made a proposal. Jack took his fate in his hands.

He was simple and straightforward about it, and certainly made a rather neat job of the affair. He showed his intensity and earnestness; and it seemed rather hard that when he concluded he was not at once accepted by the handsome girl, who stood

there blushing, but with a certain firmly regretful expression about the mouth.

Her voice trembled a little as she spoke. She said that she liked Mr. Hayes, liked him very much, and he knew it, but that it was only a great friendship. She had her ideal, and he did not fulfill it. "I cannot help it," she said, earnestly; "I have ambitions for the man whom I marry. I could really love only a man of action, of physical bravery, one who could not be content with a life of ease, however cultivated such a life. What have you done? You but enjoy existence! I want some one rugged. Why, even your physical movements are languid! I'd rather marry the roughest viking that ever sailed the seas than the most accomplished *faineant*. I—"

The sentence was completed with one of the most piercing and agonizing screams that ever issued from the throat of a fair young woman. At the same instant she disappeared from sight.

Jack stood for a single second utterly appalled, but he was recalled to life by a second scream, equaling the first in every way, and issuing from a hole in the snow beside him. He could see in the depths the top of a very pretty hat. He realized the situation in a moment. They had just rounded the upturned roots of a monster fallen pine, and Miss Lennox had broken through the crusted snow and dropped into the cavity beneath. He threw himself on the ground, reached down his arms, and

finally calmed the fair prisoner sufficiently to enable her to do her part. She reached up her hands; he caught a firm hold of her wrists and began pulling her out. He lifted her thus until her head and shoulders were in the sunlight, then sought to put an arm around her waist to complete the task. He was not grumbling at the good the gods had sent him. He was not at first in a hurry. With one arm at last fairly encircling that plump person, with that soft breath upon his cheek, he was not going to be violent. He was going to lift slowly and intelligently until the goddess should be upon her feet again. Then, from beneath, came a growl which was almost a roar; there was another wild shriek from Miss Lennox, there was the sound of brushwood being torn away, and as Jack, with a mighty effort, lifted the girl to her feet beside him, there appeared at the hole the blazing eyes and red mouth of a bear, furious at having been aroused from its winter sleep.

A fragment of limb lay at Jack's feet. With the unconscious instinct of preservation for both, he seized it and struck the beast fairly on the snout. It fell back, but uprose again, growling horribly. The girl stood, too dazed to move, but Jack grasped her roughly by the shoulder, turned her about and shouted, hoarsely, "Run!" then made another blow at the scrambling animal. She reeled for a moment, then gathered herself together and ran like a seared doe. As she ran she screamed—about one

scream to each five yards, as carefully estimated by the young man at a future period.

Despite her terror, the girl turned at a distance of a hundred yards, stopped and looked backward for an instant, and saw what was certainly an interesting spectacle, but which made her turn again and flee even more swiftly down the pathway, renewing her cries as she sped.

Affairs were becoming more than interesting for Mr. Jack Hayes. It may be said fairly and honestly of him, left facing that bear, gaunt and ugly and flesh-clamoring from the winter's sleep, though still muscular and enduring—as bears are made—that he demeaned himself as should become a modern gentleman. He could not or would not run away. He knew that the beast must not be released, and knew that unless faced it would clamber in a moment to the level surface.

I have read somewhere, as doubtless have you, because it has wandered throughout the newspapers of the world, the story of a famous Russian officer, famous, too, as a great swordsman, who once faced a brown bear robbed of her young, and beat her into insensibility, since his blows were swifter and more adroit than those delivered by her great forearms. In the midst of the battle, some thought of this hard Russian tale drifted through the mind of Hayes, as he dealt blow after blow upon the muzzle of the brute seeking daylight and vengeance upon its opponent. Each time as the bear upreared,

the stout limb descended, but apparently with slight effect, and with each rush and tearing down of matted snow and twigs, the angle of ascent was lessening perceptibly. To say that Jack was exceedingly earnest and anxious would not be to exaggerate a particle. Furthermore, he was becoming warm and scant of breath. A portion of the breath which remained to him he utilized in whooping most lustily.

The girl burst into the great front room of the log house, where the preparations for Easter were in progress. Most of the guests had not yet reached the house, but there were the rector and two ladies. She staggered into the room, but partially recovered from the effect of her wild flight, and could only gasp out, "Jack!—a bear!—a little way up the eastern path!" and then fell promptly in a heap upon the furs of a great lounge.

The rector stood astonished for a moment, then realized the situation. Upon the wall hung a double-barreled gun, which he knew was loaded with buckshot, intended for the vagrant wild geese still seeking northern habitats. He leaped for the gun, and asked a question hurriedly:

"The east path?" he cried.

"Yes," the girl contrived to say, and the rector, gun in hand, dashed out of the doorway and to the eastern path, which he knew well, for he had been a guest the preceding autumn; and then over the snow of that pathway gave such an exhibition

of clerical sprinting as probably never before occurred since Jonah fled for Tarsish. He reached the scene of an exceeding lively exchange of confidences in about two minutes, and saw what alarmed and at the same time inspirited him most mightily. He rushed up close to the fencing Hayes, and as the beast in the pit upreared himself head and shoulders, managed to discharge one barrel of the shotgun. The shot was well intended but ill-aimed. It was but a dispensation of Providence that Jack and not the bear was killed. The beast sank back for another rush, and at the same instant Jack tore the gun from the reverend gentleman's hands, and as the thing rose again poured the contents of the second barrel fairly into the middle of his throat. The episode was ended. Meanwhile, rushing and shouting along the pathway, came the full contingent of male guests. They arrived only in time to hear the story and to assist in heaving out the body of the bear, which was dragged down the pathway and to the house amid much clamor and gratulation. Jack, in a violent perspiration and extremely shaky, entered the house, where much was said, all of which he took modestly, and then everybody prepared for dinner. The feast and later the "sugaring-off" were occasions of much joyousness, but Jack and Miss Lennox conversed but little, save in a courteous and casual way. There was a fine time generally, and all slept the sleep of the more or less just.

Easter morning broke fair and clear. It was good that morning to hear sounding out over the snow and in the sunlight the farewell notes of the flitting birds of the north and the greetings of the coming birds of the spring. It was certainly spring now, and all was life and hope and happiness. The Easter services were to begin at ten. It was nine o'clock, or maybe it was nine fifteen—it is well to be accurate about such important matters as this—that Jack and Miss Lennox met apart from the others, who were assisting in some arrangement of the greenery. There was something of the quality which is known as "melting" in her eyes when she looked at him, and the villain felt encouraged.

"It is Easter morning," he said. "Are you glad? Everything seems better."

She looked up into his face, and only smiled and blushed.

"Are you all right?" said he. "I've been troubled over you."

She said nothing at first, but the old critical and defiant look came into her face again. It had now, however, in it a trace of the gently judicial. "I was mistaken," she said; "you *are* a man of action."

"Will you be my wife, then?" said Jack.

"Yes," said she.

Well, they are married, as people so frequently are, and Jack is not going to the log-house in

Michigan this spring, because that St. Louis-Chicago baby is too young to be abandoned. I like Easter and I like Jack and his wife, and I like babies, but I don't like being robbed of an outing in a region where spring comes in so suddenly and gloriously. How wise was the old pessimist who declared that "a man married is a man marred"—but, then, who will agree with me!

PROFESSOR MORGAN'S MOON

I AM aware that attention has already been called in the daily newspapers to certain curious features of the astronomical discussion between Professor Macadam of Joplin University and Professor Morgan of the same institution; but newspaper comment has related only to the scientific aspects of the case, lacking all references to the origin of the debate and to the inevitable woman and the romance. As a matter of fact, the discussion which has set the scientific world, or at least the astronomical part of it, by the ears, had its inception in a love affair, and terminated with that affair's symmetrical development. It has seemed to me that something more than the dry husks of the story should be given to the public, and that a great many people might be quite as much interested in the romance as in the mathematical conclusions reached. That is why I tell the tale in full.

Had Professor Macadam never owned a daughter, or had the one appertaining to him been plain instead of charming, young Professor Morgan would never have broken a metaphorical lance with the crusty senior educator. But Professor

Macadam did have a daughter, Lee—odd name for a girl—and she was about as pretty as a girl may grow to be, and sometimes they grow that way amazingly. She was clever, too, and good, and Professor Morgan had not known her for half a year when it was all up with him. It became essential for his permanent welfare, mental, moral and physical, that this particular young woman should be his, to have and to hold, and he did not deny the fact to himself at all. Without going into detail, it may be added that he did not deny the fact to her, either, and so exerted himself and improved his opportunities that before much time elapsed he had secured a strong ally in his designs. This ally was the young lady herself, and it will be admitted that Professor Morgan had thus made a fair beginning. But all was not to be easy for the pair, however faithful or resolved they were.

College professors generally are not much addicted to either the accumulation or the love of money, but Professor Macadam was rather an exception to the rule. Sixty years of age, noted as a great mathematician and astronomer, he had long had a good income from his teaching and his books, and had hoarded and made good investments, and was a rich man. Lee, being an only child, was in fair way some day of coming into a fortune, and her father was resolved that it should not go to any poor man. He had often expressed his opinion on this subject; it was well known to

the lovers, but this did not prevent Professor Morgan, who was just beginning and had only a fair salary with no surplus. from asking the old man for his daughter.

The interview was not a long one, but there was a good deal of low barometer and high temperature to it, meteorologically speaking. Professor Macadam fumed, and flatly declined to consider the subject of such an alliance. "It is absurd!" he said. "What would you live on?"

Professor Morgan intimated that two people might sustain themselves in a modest way on the salary he was getting.

"Nonsense, sir! Nonsense!" was the retort. "My daughter has been accustomed to a better style of living than you could afford her, and I decline to consider the proposition for a moment. You're in no condition to support a wife, sir! Figures do not lie, sir! Figures do not lie!"

Professor Morgan suggested that figures sometimes did give a wrong impression.

"Then it is because they are used by an incompetent person. I am surprised that you, sir, assistant professor of astronomy in a great institution of learning, should assert that any mathematical fact is not an actual one. Prove to me that figures lie, and you can have my daughter! But this is only nonsense. You are presumptuous and something of an ass, sir. Good day, sir!"

When Professor Morgan imparted to his sweet-

heart the result of this interesting interview, they were both somewhat cast down. It was she who first recovered.

"And so papa said you could have me, did he, if you could prove to him that figures ever lied?"

"Yes, he said that, though I don't suppose he meant it. It was simply a sort of defiance he blurted out in his anger. But what difference does it make? How could I prove an impossibility in any event, even if such a grotesque challenge were accepted in earnest? When I said to him that figures might give wrong impressions, it was only to convey the idea that people who cared very much for each other might get along with very little money, and that the ordinary estimates for necessary income did not apply."

"You don't know papa! He'll keep his word, even one uttered in excitement. He has almost a superstition regarding the literal observance of any promise made, though it might be accidental and really meaning nothing. You are very clever—as great a mathematician as papa is. You must prove to him that figures sometimes really lie, even where computations are all correct. Surely, there must be some way of doing that."

"I'm afraid not, dear. The moon isn't made of green cheese."

"But there must be some way, and you must find it. You shall be like a knight of old, who is to

gain a maiden's hand by the accomplishment of some great deed of derring-do. Am I not worth it, sir?" And she stood before him jauntily, with her pretty elbows out.

He looked down into a face so fair and so full of all fealty and promise of sweet wifehood that he resolved in an instant that if it lay in human power to meet the terms of the old man's challenge the thing should be accomplished. He said as much, and what he said was punctuated labially. Being a professor, it would never have done for him to neglect his punctuation.

It was not three months after the stormy Macadam-Morgan interview that Professor Morgan's great book on "Eclipses Past and to Come" made its appearance. And it was not three weeks after that great work's appearance when all the scientific world was in a turmoil.

Professor Macadam had, for a season after the interview between him and Professor Morgan, maintained a cold and formal air in all his intercourse with the latter gentleman, but after a time this wore away, and the old relations, never very familiar, were resumed. Indeed, it seemed at length that Professor Macadam had forgotten all about the affair, or if he remembered it at all, did so only as of an exhibition of foolishness which his own force and wisdom had checked forever. When therefore Professor Morgan's book ap-

peared it was read at once with interest, as the work of a scientist, who, though not a veteran, was of undeniable ability and good repute.

But when the book had been considered there was a literary earthquake! Professor Macadam reviewed it, and sought to tear it, figuratively, limb from limb! He was ably supported by other pundits everywhere. The point upon which the debate hinged was a remarkable one.

As already indicated, Professor Morgan's standing as an astronomer was undisputed, and Professor Macadam did not question the accuracy of his reasoning, so far as mere computations went. It is known, even to the non-scientific, that eclipses of the moon can be foretold with the utmost accuracy; and not only this, but that astronomers can readily determine, by the same methods reversed, when eclipses of the moon have occurred at any time in the past. It was to one of Professor Morgan's past eclipses that Professor Macadam objected.

In a long-ago issue of a great foreign review, M. Camille Flammarion, the French astronomer, advanced the view that this globe has been inhabited twenty-two millions of years, which is accepted by other scientists as a fair estimate. It is also admitted that the moon was at one time part of the earth, and was hurled off into space before the crust upon this body had fairly cooled. Of course, there is no way of fixing the exact date of this

interesting event, but for the sake of convenience it is put at about one hundred millions of years ago. It may have been a little earlier or a little later. But that does not matter.

In the table of dates of past eclipses in Professor Morgan's book he referred to a certain eclipse of the moon which occurred about two hundred millions of years before Christ, and not a flaw could be discovered in his figuring. But Professor Macadam did not hesitate to make a charge. He asserted with great vehemence that as there was no moon two hundred millions of years before Christ, there could have been no eclipse of the moon. Had there been an eclipse of the moon then, he admitted that the eclipse would have taken place at just the time Professor Morgan's table indicated; but as the case was, he referred to such an event contemptuously as "an Irish eclipse," and was extremely scathing in his language. His review closed with an expression of regret that an educator connected with the great Joplin University could have been guilty of such an error, not of figures, but of logic.

Professor Morgan replied to all his critics, Professor Macadam included, in a masterly article, in which he declared that he was responsible only for his mathematics, not for the degree of cohesion of the earth's mucky mass hundreds of millions of years ago, and that the eclipse he had calculated must stand.

Professor Macadam came to the charge once more,

briefly but savagely. He again admitted the correctness of the computation, but ridiculed Professor Morgan's attitude on the subject. "His figures," he concluded, "simply lie."

The day following the appearance of Professor Macadam's final article, he was called upon in his study by Professor Morgan. The younger man did not present the appearance of a crushed controversialist. On the contrary, his air was pleasantly expectant. "I called," said he, "to learn how soon you expected my marriage with your daughter to take place?"

The older man started in his seat, "What do you mean, sir?" he demanded.

"Why, I called simply to discuss my marriage with your daughter. On the occasion when you refused my first proposition you said that if I proved that figures would lie your consent would be forthcoming. I have proved to you that figures sometimes lie. I have not only your own admission, but your assertion to that effect, made public in the columns of a great quarterly. I know you to be a man of your word. I have come to talk about my marriage."

Professor Macadam did not at once reply. His face became very red. "I must talk with my daughter," he said finally.

That afternoon Professor Macadam and his daughter had an interview. The young lady proved very firm. She would listen to no equivocation and

no protest. She had thought her father to be a man of honor—that was all she had to say. She touched the old gentleman upon his weak point. He yielded, not gracefully, but that was of no moment. She and Professor Morgan, just then, had grace enough for an entire family—in their hearts.

And so they were married. And so, too, you know the origin of one of the most exciting scientific discussions of the period.

RED DOG'S SHOW WINDOW

THE snow lay deep beside the Black River of the Northwest Territory, and upon its surface, where the ice was yet thick, for it was February and weeks must pass before in the semi-arctic climate there would be signs of spring. In the forests, which at intervals approach the river, the snow was as deep as elsewhere, but there was not the desolation of the plains, for in the wood were many wild creatures, and man was there as well; not man of a very advanced type, it is true, but man rugged and dirty and philosophic. In the shadow of the evergreens, upon a point extending far into the water, stood the tepees of a group of Indians, hardy hunters and dependents in a vague sort of way of the great fur company which took its name from Hudson's Bay.

Squatted beside the fire of pine knots and smoking silently in one of the tepees was Red Dog, a man of no mean quality among the little tribe. He had faculties. He had also various idiosyncrasies. He was undeniably the best hunter and trapper and trainer of dogs to sledge, as well as the most expert upon snowshoes of all the Indians living upon the point, and he was, further-

more, one of the dirtiest of them and the biggest drunkard whenever opportunity afforded. Fortunately for him and for his squaw, Bigbeam, as she had been facetiously named by an agent of the company, the opportunities for getting drunk were rare, for the company is conservative in the distribution of that which makes bad hunters. Given an abundance of firewater and tobacco, Red Dog was the happiest Indian between the northern boundary of the United States and Lake Gary; deprived of them both he hunted vigorously, thinking all the while of the coming hour when, after a long journey and much travail, he should be in what was his idea of heaven again. To-day, though, the rifle bought from the company stood idle beside the ridge-pole, the sledge dogs snarled and fought upon the snow outside, and Bigbeam, squat and broad as became her name, looked askance at her lord as she prepared the moose meat, uncertain of his temper, for his face was cloudy. Red Dog was, in fact, perplexed, and was planning deeply.

Good reason was there for Red Dog's thought. Events of the immediate future were of moment to him and all his fellows, among whom, though no chief was formally acknowledged, he was recognized as leader; for had he not at one time been with the company as a hired hunter? Had he not once gone with a fur-carrying party even to Hudson's Bay, and thence to the far south and even to Quebec? And did he not know the ways of the

company, and could not he talk a French patois which enabled him to be understood at the stations? Now, as fitting representative of himself and of his clan, a great responsibility had come upon him, and he was lost in as anxious thought as could come to a biped of his quality.

Like a more or less benevolent devil-fish, the Hudson Bay Company has ever reached out its tentacles for new territory where furs abound. Such a region once discovered, a great log house is built there, and furs are bought from the Indians who hunt within the adjacent region. This is, of course, a vast convenience for the Indians, who are thus enabled to exchange their winter catch of peltries for what they need, without a journey of sometimes hundreds of miles to the nearest trading post. Hence, under the wise treatment of Indians by the British, there has long been competition between separate Indian bands to secure the location of a new post within their own territory. Thus came the strait of Red Dog. A new post had been decided upon, but there was doubt at company headquarters as to whether it should be at Red Dog's point or a hundred miles to the westward, where, it was asserted by Little Peter, head man of a tribe there, the creeks were fairly clogged with otter, the woods were swarming with silver foxes and sable, and as for moose, they were thick as were once the buffalo to the south. Red Dog had told his own story as well, but the factor at the post toward Fort

Defiance was still undecided. He had told Red Dog and his rival that he would decide the matter the coming spring when they came down the river with their furs for the spring trading. The best fur region was what he sought. He would decide the matter from the relative quality of the catch.

So Red Dog had hunted and trapped vigorously, and would ordinarily have been satisfied with the outcome, for his band had found one of the best fur-bearing regions of the river valley, and the new post was deserved there upon its merits. This, however, the factor did not know. The issue depended upon the relatively good showing made by Red Dog and Little Peter. Despite his name, Little Peter was a full-blooded Indian and. like Red Dog, he was shrewd.

Red Dog smoked long, and the lines upon his forehead grew deeper as he thought and schemed. At times his glance, bent most of the time upon the fire before him, would be raised to seek the great bale of furs, the product of his winter's catch. The meal was eaten, the hours passed, and then, with a grunt, he ordered Bigbeam to open the package, which work she performed with great deftness, for who but she had cleaned the skins and bound them most compactly? They were spread upon the dirt floor, a rich and luxurious display. No Russian princess, no Tartar king, no monarch of the south, ever saw anything finer for consideration. There were the smooth, silken skins of the

cross fox, of the blue fox, that strange, deeply silken-furred creature, the blend of which is a puzzle to the naturalists; of the silver fox, which ranges so far southward that the farmers and the farmers' sons of the northern tier of the United States follow him fiercely with dog and gun because of the value of his coating; of the otter, most graceful of all creatures of land or water, and in the far north with fur which is a poem; of the sable, which creeps farther south than many people know of; of the grim wolverine, black and yellow-white and thickly and densely furred, and of the great gray wolf of nearly the Arctic circle, a wolf so grizzly and so long and high and gaunt and strong of limb that he tears sometimes from the sledge ranges the best dog of all their pack and leaps easily away into the forest with him; a beast who transcends in real being even the old looming gray wolf of mediæval story who once haunted northern Germany and the British Isles and the Scandinavian forests, and who made such impress upon men's minds that the legend of the werewolf had its birth. There were thick skins of the moose and there was much dried meat. All these, save the meat, contributed to make expansive the display which Bigbeam, utilizing all the floor space, laid before the eyes ot Red Dog.

The showing made Red Dog even more anxiously contemplative. He thought of the long, weary way to the present trading post, and of how it would be

equally long and weary were a new post to be located in the hunting grounds of Little Peter. He knew how soft was the snow when it began to melt in early spring, how the snow shoes sank deeply and became a burden to lift, how the sledge runners no longer slid along the surface, and the floundering dogs tired after half a day's journey; he thought how full the river was of jagged ice cakes in the spring, and how perilous was the passage of a deeply-laden canoe. Surely the new post must not go to Little Peter. And Red Dog was most crafty.

There must have been, however attenuated, a fiber of French blood throughout the being of Red Dog. It would have been odd, indeed, had the case been otherwise, for the half-breeds penetrated long ago through the far northwest, and the blood underneath does not always show itself through the copper skin. Anyhow, Red Dog gazed interestedly and fixedly upon the gloriously soft carpet before him, and there came to his brain a sense of the wonderfully contrasting coloring. He rose to his feet and arranged and rearranged the pelts to please his fancy. At last he secured a combination which made him pause. He returned to his seat and gazed long and earnestly upon the picture before him; then he turned his eyes downward and thought as long again. Bigbeam came to him and muttered words regarding some affair of the teepee. He did not answer her, but, as she passed silently

toward the doorway, he raised his eyes and noted her broad expanse of back in the doorway to which the far distant blue sky gave a distinct and striking outline. He shouted to her gutturally and hoarsely to stand there as she was, and the woman stopped herself in the doorway; then Red Dog bent his head and thought again. He thought of a window he had seen in far Quebec, where soft and brilliant furs were shown upon a flat surface to the most advantage. Why could he not with such display most impress McGlenn, the Scotch factor, with the importance of his hunting ground, and where could better display be made than upon the broad back of his squat squaw Bigbeam? He would make her sew the furs together in a mighty cloak, and she should ride the river with him when the ice broke and the spring tides bore them down in their great canoe to the factor's place toward Fort Reliance.

And the cloak was made. Talk of the wrappings of your princesses, of the shallow-ermine-girded trappings of your queens—they were but yearning things, but imitations, as compared with this great cloak of the bounteous Bigbeam.

In the center of the field of this wondrous cloak lay white as snow the skin of an ermine of the far north, and about it were arranged sables so deep in color that the contrast was almost blackness, but for the play of light and shade upon the shining fur. About the sables came contrast again of

the skins of silver fox, alternating with those of the otter, and about all this glorious center piece, set at right angles, were arranged the skins of the marten, the blue fox, the mink, the otter and the beaver. It was a magnificent combination, bizarre in its contrasts but wonderfully striking, and with a richness which can scarcely be described, for the knowing Red Dog selected only the thickest and glossiest and most valuable of his furs. He gazed upon the display with a grunt of satisfaction.

Red Dog rose to his feet and called sharply to his squaw, who entered the tent again with a celerity remarkable in one of her construction. The Indian glanced meaningly at the dog whip which hung upon the center pole, and there was rapid conversation. For days afterward Bigbeam was busy sewing together the furs, as Red Dog had arranged them, and attaching thongs of buckskin so that the wonderful garment could be tied at her neck and waist.

Spring came at last, and Red Dog and Bigbeam set off upon their journey to the factor's, as did other Indians from other localities for five hundred miles about. It was a dreadful journey, the hardships of which were undergone with characteristic Indian stoicism. There were break-downs of the sledges, there were blizzards in which the travelers almost perished, there was sickness among the dogs; and when finally the point was reached

where the river was fairly open, and where the big canoe, *cached* from the preceding season, could be launched and the load bestowed within it, there followed miserable adventures and misadventures, until, limping and pinched of face, the Indian and his squaw drew their boat to land upon the shore beside the trading post.

The trading posts of the Northwest Territory vary little in their manner of construction. They are built of logs as long as can be conveniently obtained, and consist of three divisions, the front a store with a rude counter, behind this the living-rooms of the factor and his assistants, and in the rear the great storeroom for the year's supplies. The front or trading room is usually well lighted by windows set in the side, for it is well to have good light when fine furs are to be passed upon. The trading room of McGlenn offered no exception to the rule, and his window seats were good resting places for the casual barterer.

Indians were thronging about and in the post as Red Dog and Bigbeam lugged their bale of furs up the bank and into the big room. There was jabbering among the bucks, while the squaws stood silently about, and among the most violent of the jabberers was Little Peter, who had already talked with the factor and by magnificent lying had almost convinced him that his own territory was the best for a new post. Unfortunately, though, for Little Peter, his efforts and those of his band had been

somewhat lax during the winter, and the catch they brought did not in all respects sustain his story. Red Dog and Bigbeam mingled with the other Indians, and Red Dog was soon engaged in a violent controversy with his rival, while Bigbeam stood silent among the squaws. But Bigbeam was very tired; she had wielded the paddle for many days, she had lost sleep and her eyelids were heavy; nature was too strong; she edged away from the line of squaws, settled down into one of the window seats, her broad back filling completely its lower half, and drifted away into such dreamland as comes to the burdened and uncomplaining Indian women of the Northwest.

Down a pathway leading beside the storehouse came McGlenn, the factor, and his assistant, Johnson. They reached the window wherein Bigbeam was reposing and stopped in their tracks! They could not believe their eyes! Were they in Bond or Regent Street again? Never had they seen such magnificent display of costly furs before, never one so barbaric, unique and striking, and, withal, so honest in its richness! They did not hesitate a moment. They rushed around to the main entrance, tore their way profanely through the dense groups of Indians, and reached the window wherein they had seen displayed the marvel. Then they started back appalled! The interior appearance of that window afforded, perhaps, as vivid and complaining contrast to its exterior as had ever been pre-

sented since views had rivalry. The thongs about the neck of the swart Bigbeam had become undone, and her normal front filled all the window's broad interior. That front, to put it mildly, though picturesque, was not attractive. It afforded an area of greasy and dirty brown cuticle and of moose skin, if possible dirtier and greasier still. The two white men could not understand themselves. Was there witchcraft about; had they been drinking too much of the Scotch whisky in the stores? They forced their way outside and looked at the window again, and discovered that they were sane. There, pressed closely against the window by the weight of the sleeping Bigbeam, still extended in all its glory the wonderful robe of furs. Again they entered the post and unceremoniously pulled from her pleasant resting place the helpmate of Red Dog, the hunter. The cloak was seized upon and the two men hurried with it to the inner apartments, where it was studied carefully and with vigorous expressions of admiration.

"He's got it!" exclaimed McGlenn. "He's got it, the foxy rascal! It's only a trick of Red Dog's; but the buck who knows furs as well as that and who lives in a region where such furs can be found, and who's been sharp enough to utilize his squaw for a scheme like this, deserves the new post anyhow. You'll have to go up there, Johnson, and take some of the voyageurs with you, as soon as the river is open to the head, and establish a new post

there. There'll be profit in it." Then Red Dog was ordered to come in.

How, recognizing the effect already produced upon the factor by Bigbeam's cloak, Red Dog waxed eloquent in description of the fur producing facilities of his region cannot here be described at length. From the picture he drew vehemently in bad French-Canadian language it would appear that the otter and the beaver fought together for mere breathing places in the streams, that the sable and the marten and the ermine were household pets, and that as for the foxes, blue and silver gray, they were so numerous that the spruce grouse had learned to build their nests in trees! Turning his regard from his own country, he referred to that of Little Peter. He described Little Peter as a desperate character with a black heart and with no skill at all in the capture of wild things. As to Little Peter's country, it was absurd to talk about it! It was a desolate waste of rocks and shrub, whereon even the little snowbirds could not live, and where the few bad Indians who found a home there subsisted upon roots alone. It was a great oration.

The factor and his assistant listened and laughed and made allowances, but did not alter the decision reached. Red Dog was told that the new post would be established in his own hunting grounds. As a special favor, he was given a quart bottle of whisky and ordered sternly to conduct himself as

well as he could under the circumstances. Never was prouder Indian than Red Dog when he emerged from the storeroom. Before the day had ended, his furs were all disposed of, including the marvelous cloak, and in his big canoe were stored away quantities of powder and bullets and tobacco, and other things appertaining to the comfort of the Northwestern Indian. In place of her cloak of furs Bigbeam wore a blanket so gorgeous of coloring that even the brilliantly hued wood ducks envied her as they swept by overhead. In the bottom of the canoe lay Red Dog. He had secured more whisky, and was as the dead who know not. He would awake on the morrow with a headache, perhaps, but with a proud consciousness that he had accomplished the feat of a statesman for himself and for his band. Bigbeam rowed steadily toward home, crooning some barbarous old half-song of her race. She was very happy.

MARKHAM'S EXPERIENCE

MARKHAM awoke late for the simple reason that it had been nearly morning when he went to bed. He awoke lying flat upon his back, and looked up dreamily at the pattern on the ceiling. It was unfamiliar and that set his mind at work, and gradually he recognized where he was and why he was there. He reasoned idly that it must be as late as ten o'clock in the forenoon, and knew that by reaching out his arm he could open the shutter of the hotel window, admitting the sunlight and affording a view over the park and the blue lake, but he was laggard about it. There was a pleasure in debating the matter with himself. He could hear bells, the whistling of steamers and locomotives, the rumble of carriages and the murmur which comes from many distant voices. He recognized that another day in a great city was fairly on, and that the thousands were in motion while he lay listless.

He forgot the sounds and thought about himself. He acknowledged, though with a certain lenience of judgment, the absurdity of being where he was. He should have shown more resolve, he admitted, at 2 A. M., and have gone to his lodgings, a mile or so away. But he had been doing good work the

night before; that, at least, should, he felt, be counted to his credit. Payne had come on from Washington with a duty of moment to perform, and had called upon Markham to assist him. Years had passed since they had worked together and it was a pleasure to renew the combination. How well they understood each other's methods, and how easily confident they felt united! They had been dilatory with what they had to accomplish, so self-conscious of their force were they, and had justified themselves gracefully in the event. They had strolled forth after their labor, the last dispatch sent, had smoked and become reminiscent, and had been soaked by a summer rain. They had been boys again. Of the two, Markham had been the more buoyant and more reckless. He had been a sick man, though still upon his legs and among his fellows, when Payne had found him. Things had been going wrong with Markham. His equation with Her had been disturbed.

It had been a test, there was no doubt of that, especially of the woman, the relations between Markham and her who had come to be more to him than he had ever before known or imagined one human being could be to another. She loved him; she had confessed that in a sweet, womanly way, but there was an obstacle between them. Before she could become his, there was something for him to accomplish; something hard, perplexing, and difficult in every way. He had not been idle. He

had laid the foundations for his structure of happiness, but foundations do not reveal themselves as do upper stories, and she could not see the careful stonework. The domes and minarets of the castle for which she may have longed were not in sight. He alone knew what had been his work, but she was hardly satisfied. And, then, suddenly, because of a disturbing fancy, founded on a fact which was yet not a fact in its relations, she had become another being. One thing, meaning much, she had done, which took from the man his strength. It was as if his heart had been drained of its blood. He was not himself. He groped mentally. Was there no faithful love in woman; no love like his, which could not help itself and was without alternative? Were women less than men, and was calculation or instability a possibility with the sweetest and the noblest of them? No boy was this; he had known very many women very well, but he was helpless as a babe in the new world he had found when he met this one who had become so much. She had changed him mentally and morally, and even physically, for he had been a careless liver, and she had turned him from his drifting into a better course. She had made him, and now, had he been a weaker man, she would have unmade him. And he had become ill because of it, and almost desperate. Then came the evidence that she was a woman, as good women are dreamed of, after all; and they understood, and had

come close together to hope again. It gave him life once more. There was, and would be, the memory of the lapse, but scars do not cripple. He was himself again. He was thinking of it all, as he lay late in bed this summer morning. He was a sluggard, he said to himself. He must go forth and do things—for Her. He raised his arm to throw open the shutter.

Ah! The arm would not rise! At least the man could not extend it far enough to open the shutter. There was a twinge of pain and a strange stiffness of the elbow. The other arm was raised—nothing the matter with that. The man tried to move his legs. The left responded, but the right was as useless as the arm. There was a pain, too, across the loins as Markham sought to turn himself in bed. He was astonished. There had been no pain until he moved. "What's the matter with me?" he muttered. "I'm crippled; but how, and why?"

There was quietude for a few moments and then more deliberate effort. With his unaffected leg and arm, the victim of physical circumstances he could not explain worked himself around as if upon a pivot until the preponderance of his weight was outside the bed. Then, with vast caution, he tilted himself upward gently until he found himself sitting upon the bed's edge, his feet just touching the floor, and the crippled member refusing to bear weight. Markham bore down upon the right foot. It was stiff and seemed as if it would break before

it bent, while the pain was exquisite, but the man could not stay where he was. He got down upon the floor and crawled toward his clothing. He contrived, somehow, to dress himself, but the task accomplished, his face was pallid and he was wet with perspiration. He tilted himself to his feet and creeping along by the wall, reached the elevator and so finally the office floor.

There was a tinkle of glasses in the hotel saloon, and through the open door came the fragrance of mint and pineapple. There was a white-clad, wax-mustached man behind the bar in there, who, as Markham knew, could make a morning cocktail "to raise the dead," and not to raise them stark and rigid, like the bodies in Doré's "Judgment Day," but flexile and full of life. "Jack could mix me something that would help," he thought, and turned instinctively, but checked himself. More than a year had passed since he had tasted a morning cocktail. There had been a promise in the way. He looked down at his knee and foot. "Let them twist," he said, and then called for a cab.

He did not like to do it; it was a confession of weakness, but in his own apartments again, and in bed as the only restful place, Markham sent for a doctor. The doctor came, not the ponderous old practitioner of the conventional type called for by a knowing man, but one of the better modern type, educated, a man of the world, canny with Scotch blood, but progressive and with the experimental

tendency progressive men exhibit. Markham told what manner of cup had been put to his lips. "What's the matter with me?" he demanded.

"Muscular rheumatism."

"And what are you going to do about it?"

"Oh, I'll follow the custom of the profession and make you a prescription."

"And about the effect?"

"Possibly it will help you."

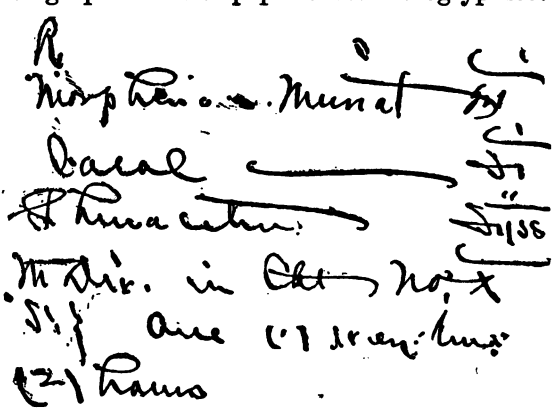
"Just at a casual estimate, how long am I to be crippled?"

"That depends."

"Depends on what?"

The doctor laughed. "There's a difference in rheumatism—and in men. If you don't mind, I'll reserve my answer for a day or two."

Markham growled. The doctor went away after writing upon a bit of paper these hieroglyphics:



The prescription came, a powder of about the color of a pulverized Rameses II, and with what Markham thought might be very nearly the flavor of that defunct but estimable monarch. Night came also at length, and with it came an experience, new even to this man who had been knocked about somewhat, and who thought he knew his world. A man with a pain and isolation can make a great study of the former, and Markham had certainly all facilities in such uncanny direction. The day passed drearily, but without much suffering to the man in the bed. He could read, holding his book in his left hand, and he read far into the night. Then he was formally introduced — he couldn't help it—to Our Lady of Rheumatism. He was destined to become as well acquainted with her as was Antony with Cleopatra, or Pericles with Aspasia. Not extended, but violent, was to be the flirtation between these two.

Markham was tired and inclined to sleep, despite the obstacle intervening with each movement. Exhaustion forces a man to sleep sometimes when the pain which racks him is such that sleep would, under other circumstances, be impossible. When sleeping, come dreams of whatever object is nearest the heart, but the dreams are ever fantastic and distorted. There may be pleasant phases to the imagined happenings—this must be when the pain has for the moment ceased—but the dream is usually most perplexing, and its culmination most

grotesque. At first Markham could not sleep at all. He was experiencing new sensations. From the affected leg and arm the nerves telegraphed to the brain certain interesting information. It was to the effect that a little pot was boiling on—or under—one leg and one arm. It was in the hollow underneath the knee, and that opposite the elbow joint that the boiling was—hardly a boil at first. The pain was not a twinge, it was not an ache, it was just a faintly simmering, vaguely hurting thing, enough to keep a man awake. Move but a trifle and the simmer became a boil. So the man lay still and suffered, not intensely, but irritatingly. And at last, despite the simmering, he slept.

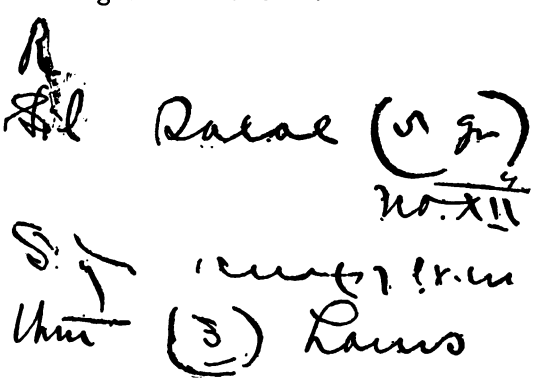
"What dreams may come!" Markham slept, and, sleeping, he was with his love again, or at least trying to be. And what a season of it he had! It appeared late evening to him—it might be nine o'clock—but there was moonlight, while close to the ground was a white fog. He knew that She was waiting on a street only a block away from him, but he must pass through a park, a square rather densely wooded, with an iron fence about it and gates at the center on each side. From one gate to another a path led straight across through the thick shrubbery. In the queer combination of moon and fog all seemed uncanny, but he was going to meet Her and nothing mattered. He entered the little park jauntily, and went a few yards up the graveled

walk between the trees and bushes, when there arose before him a startling figure. It was that of a man, or rather monster, with a huge chest, but narrow loins and oddly spindle legs, and with a white, dead face malignant of expression. The monster barred the passage and gestured menacingly, but uttered not a word. Markham did not care much. He was simply on his way to meet Her, and as for monsters and *outre* things in general, what did they amount to! He was going to meet Her! He advanced a little and studied the creature. "I can lick him," he soliloquized. "He's a whale about the chest but he's weak about the small of the back, and his legs are nothing, and I'll break him in two—him! I've got to meet Her!"

He plunged ahead, and suddenly the monster drifted aside into the bushes and out of sight. Markham went on to the gate opening upon the opposite street. He emerged upon the sidewalk and looked about for the woman he loved. She was not there. A most matter-of-fact looking man came along, and Markham asked him who or what it was that barred the passage in the park. "That?" said the wayfarer, "Oh, he's nothing! He's only The Mechanical Arbor Man!"

The explanation was enough for Markham. Any explanation is enough for any one in a dream. He went down the sidewalk fully satisfied with what was said, and intent only upon his errand. He

must find his love. Maybe she had walked along to the next block. A group of bicyclists were careering by as he crossed the street. One of them passed so close that he ran over Markham's foot. Talk of sudden agony! It came then. The man awoke. It was three o'clock in the morning, and his rheumatism had developed suddenly into an agony. He said he would be practical. Surely, medical science, if it could not do away with a disease all at once, could alleviate extraordinary pain. Why should a man suffer needlessly? He sent for the doctor, and there was another brush of words beween them. A degree of fun as well, for the doctor was not enduring anything, and was making a study of the case, and Markham was, between the ebullitions of agony, amused to an extent with his own strange physical condition. It seemed like prestidigitation to him. Here is what the doctor gave for his relief:



The dose was taken as directed, and the man, suffering, set his teeth and awaited results. They did not come. The dose was repeated, duplicated and triplicated recklessly, but without result. The pain had grown to such proportions that the nerves had become hysterical, and would be stilled by no physician's potion. They were beyond all reason. This is but a simple, brief account of a man and a woman and some rheumatism. It has no plot, and is but the record of events. The immediate sequence just at this stage of happenings was an analysis by Markham of what it was he was enduring—that is, an attempt at analysis. He was, necessarily, not at his best in a discriminating way. The account may aid the doctors, though. Those of them who have not had rheumatism must labor under disadvantages in a diagnosis.

There are certain great holes in great rocks by the sea into which the water enters through submarine channels and creeps up and up, increasing its bubbling and its seething, as the flood fills the natural well until when the top is reached there is a boiling caldron. This is flood tide. So it seemed to him, came the pain to Markham. There would be no suffering, and then would come the faint perception that something unpleasant was about to happen in a certain locality, it might be almost anywhere, for the rheumatism was no longer

confining itself to the right leg and the right arm, but rioted through all the man's limbs and about his back and shoulders. It went about like a vulture after food, alighting where it found prey to suit its fancy.

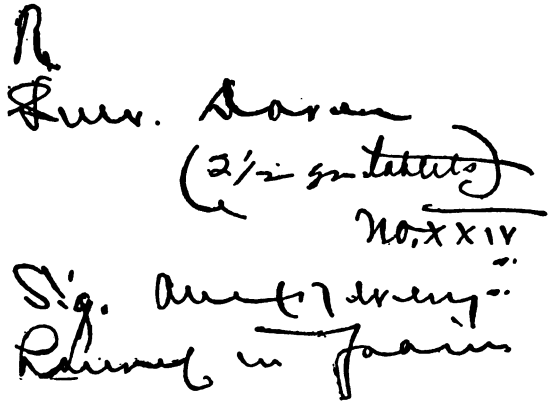
There would be the bubble and trickle beneath the knee and in the calf of the leg, and then would come the increase of turbulence as the flood rose, and then the boiling and the torture culminating throughout a long hour and a half. Then the new murmur somewhere else and the same event. Even in a finger or a toe definitely would the thing at times occur, the pain being, if possible, more intense in such event, because, seemingly, more contracted.

Pains may be said to have colors; in fact, this can be recognized even by the less imaginative. A burn, a cut, you have a scarlet pain. A slap might produce a pink pain, something less intense. But the pain of rheumatism is of another sort; there is no glitter to it. It is always blue, light at first, and gradually deepening until it becomes the very blue-blackness of all misery. This is the muscular stage; when it reaches the inflammatory there is a new sensation, something almost grinding. This latter feature Markham had to learn, for when morning broke, a single toe and all of one hand were swollen and unbendable. He was becoming an expert on sensations. He had

formed his own idea of the Spanish Inquisition. It had never invented anything worth while, after all!

At 11 A. M. all pain suddenly ceased—even Our Lady of Rheumatism tires temporarily of caressing—and the exhausted man slept. What a sleep it was—glorious, but not dreamless. He was wandering through the halls of the greatest fair the world has ever seen, and he had a purse! The exhibitors were selling things, and what marvels he bought for Her! There were Russian sables fit for her slender shoulders, and he took them. Robes of the silver fox as soft as eider-down, and a cloak of royal ermine; he secured them, too. She was fond of rubies, and he purchased the most glorious of them all. For himself he bought but a single thing, a picture of a woman with a neck like hers. And then, wandering about seeking more gifts, he came to where they were melting a silver statue of an actress and stepped into a pan of the molten metal! He awoke then. Our Lady was caressing him again.

The doctor came and heard the story, and to say that Markham exhibited a great command of language in the telling, would be to do him but mild justice. The doctor, accustomed to his kind changed into wild animals by pain, only laughed. And then that Hagenback of his profession wrote upon a piece of paper this:



There is no definiteness to this account. There is no relevance between time and occurrences, save in a vague, general way. A month would cover all the tale, but there are lapses. Markham suffered steadily, but not so patiently as would have done another man. The doctor visited him regularly, and they had difficulties such as will occur between men learning to understand each other pretty well, and so risking all debate. Two other prescriptions the doctor made, and these were all, not counting repetitions at the druggists. These two prescriptions, one, another ineffectual sedative, so great was the man's suffering, and the other but a segment of the medical program looking toward a cure, may be dropped into the matter casually.

So the man sick with what makes strong men

yield, struggled and suffered, until there came to him one day a man of color. Black as the conventional ace of spades was this man, and most impudent of expression, but he bore a note from Her. She had known him formerly but as a serving man in a boarding-house, but he had told to another servant, in her hearing, of how he had been engaged for years in a Turkish bath, and how he had cured a certain great man of rheumatism. She had remembered it, and had summoned this person of deep color that she might send him to the man she loved. There are a number of men in the world who can imagine what this messenger was to Markham under such circumstances! What to any healthy and healthful man is evidence of thinking about and for him from the one woman!

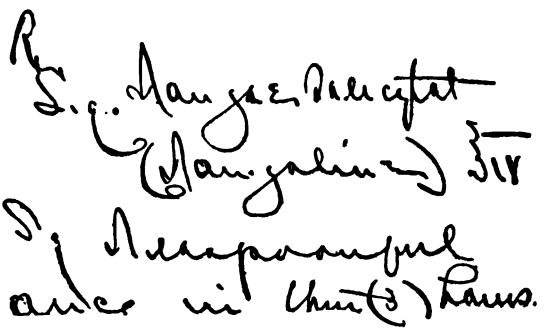
He questioned the visitor. He learned that he was at present a professional prize-fighter, most of the time out of an engagement. His appearance tended to establish his veracity in this particular instance. He looked like a thug and looked like a person out of employment for a long time.

What could he do? was demanded of the messenger. Well, he could "cure de rheumatism, shuah." How would he do it? He would "take de gemman to a Turkish bath and rub him and put some stuff on him."

Of course Markham was going to try the remedy. He would have tried a prescription of sleeping all night on wet grass under a upas tree, if

such a remedy for rheumatism had come from Her. But he was fair about it all. He sent for the doctor. It was on this occasion that occurred their first controversy.

The doctor did not object to the Turkish bath nor the manipulation by the prize-fighter. "Be care-



ful," he said, "when you come out—don't get a chill—and it may help you. What he rubs you with won't hurt you, and the rubbing is good in itself."

"But why haven't your prescriptions made me well?" demanded Markham.

The doctor was placid. "Because we don't know enough about rheumatism yet," he answered.

"Well, what excuse has your profession? You've been fooling about for thousands of years and don't know yet the real cause of a common ailment. What is rheumatism, anyhow?"

The doctor was conservative in his expression.

"It's a microbe," blurted out Markham. "I tell you it's a microbe! They are holding congresses and town meetings and pink teas all over me! There's a Browning Society meeting in my left knee just now, and that's what makes the agony. How could there be such a skipping about from one place to another, neither place diseased in itself, if there were not an active, living agency at work? Tell me that!"

The doctor admitted that microbes might cause the trouble. But he had a word or two to say about this individual case. There had been but a little over three weeks of the agony. The case was a particularly bad one, and he didn't mind admitting that the patient was particularly intractable and doubting. Optimism had much to do with a recovery in most cases of illness, and optimism was here lacking. But he would wager a box of cigars that the patient was on his feet again within two weeks. The wager was taken with great promptness, and then the patient was loaded into a cab and sent off with the black prize-fighter.

What happened in that Turkish bath will never be told with all its proper lurid coloring. The prize-fighter stopped at a drug store and bought a mixture of cocoanut oil and alcohol. Markham took a bath in the usual way, and then was taken by the demon controlling him into the apartment for soaping and all cleansing and manipulation. Here occurred the tragedy. One leg had become

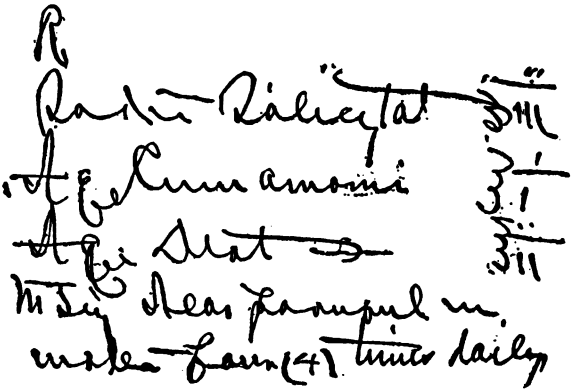
stiffened, and the prize-fighter suddenly jumped upon it and broke it down, and Markham rolled off the marble slab, almost fainting from the pain. Then he recovered and tried to fight, but could do nothing, being a weak cripple, and was literally beaten into limberness. Then, using awful language, but helpless, he was carried to the cooling room and there rubbed with the alcohol and oil. He was taken to the cab more dead than alive. That night he had a little rest, and dreamed of Her, and how she had sent him a black angel with white wings. The next day he went with the prize-fighter again, but informed him that when well he should kill him. For three days this continued. The fourth day the prize-fighter got drunk and was arrested, and was sent to jail for thirty days. Meanwhile Markham had continued the physician's prescriptions faithfully. A week later he was practically well.

The man, walking again, went to Her. He said, "You have been my salvation, as usual."

"I don't know," she answered, thoughtfully. "I do know this, though, dear, that with you away from me and ill, I realized somehow more fully what you are to me. I wanted to do things. I have read often about a mother and a child. I think I had something of that feeling. I know now about us; we must never misunderstand again. I don't think the colored man helped you much, and I understand he is a most disreputable person."

He looked into her eyes, but uttered only a sentence of two words, "Little Mother."

Markham visited the doctor, proud on his way of the swing of his legs again. "It was a pretty swift cure," he said, "and I suppose you ought to have some of the credit for it."



The doctor advanced the proposition that he ought to have, with nature, not some, but all of the credit.

"There's a difference in patients," he remarked, "and when you began to improve you 'hustled.' But my treatment, those prescriptions, offset the poison—call it microbes, if you wish—in your blood and gave your physique and constitution and general health a chance. The darky does not figure."

There was a good-natured debate, Markham

being now reasonable, but no conclusion. What did cure Markham? Was it the physician's treatment, the course with the prize-fighter, or the effect upon Markham's mind of the fact that the latter was all from Her? Will some one say?

A week or two after his complete recovery, Markham asked the doctor what course to follow to avoid a possible recurrence at any time of what he had endured. The physician was very much in earnest in his answer. "Be careful of what you eat and drink," he said, "and careful of yourself in a general way aside from that. Do not take risks of colds. Be, in short, a man of sense regarding your physical welfare."

"But I'm going into the woods of Northern Michigan on a shooting and fishing trip," was the answer, "and we've got to sleep on the ground, and to a certainty, we'll fall into some creek or lake on an average of once a day; and, old man, we've room for another in the party."

"I'll come!" said the doctor.

But what cured Markham?

THE RED REVENGER

TO build a really good jumper you must first find a couple of young iron-wood trees, say three inches in thickness and with a clean length of about twelve feet, clear of knots or limbs. If you chance to stumble upon a couple with a natural bend, so that each curls up properly like a sled runner, so much the better. But it isn't likely you'll find a pair of just that sort. Young iron-wood trees do not ordinarily grow that way, and the chances are you'll have to bend them artificially, cutting notches with an ax on the upper side of each to allow the curvature. With strong cross-pieces, stout oak reams, and the general construction of a rude sled rudely imitated, you will have made what will carry a ponderous load. The bottom of the iron-woods must, of course, be shaved off evenly with a draw-shave and some people would nail on each a shoe of strap-iron, but that is really needless. Iron-wood wears smooth against the snow and ice and makes a noble runner anyhow. Only an auger and sense and hickory pegs and an eye for business need be utilized in the making, and in fact this economical construction is the best. That "the dearest is the cheapest" is a tolerably good

maxim, but does not apply forever in regions where nature's heart and man's heart and the man's hands are all tangled up together. The hickory creaks and yields, but it is tough and does not break. Such means of conveyance as that outlined, in angles chiefly, is equal to a sled for many things, and better for many others.

There may be people of the ignorant sort who have always lived in towns, who do not know what a jumper is. A jumper is a sort of sled, a part of the twist and wrench of a new world and new devices of living, and is used in newly-settled regions. It doesn't cost much, and you can drive with it over anything that fails to offer a stern check to horses or a yoke of oxen. It is great for "coasting," as they call it in some part of the country; "sliding down hill" in others. It was a big jumper of the sort described which was the pride of the boys in the Leavitt district school. They had nailed boards across it to make a floor, and the load that jumper carried on occasions was something wonderful. It would sustain as many boys and girls as could be packed upon it. Sometimes there came a need for strange devices as to getting on, and then the mass of boys would make the journey with its perils, laid criss-cross in layers, like cord-wood, four deep and very much alive and apprehensive.

The Leavitt school was situated in the country, ten miles from the nearest town, and those who

attended it were the farmers' sons and daughters. In winter the well-grown ones, those who had work to do in summer, would appear among the pupils, and this winter Jack Burrows, aged eighteen, was among the older boys. He was there, strong, hard working at his books, a fine young animal, and it may be added of him that he was there, in love, deeply and almost hopelessly. Among the girls in attendance was one who was different from the rest, just as an Alderney is different from a group of Devon heifers. She was no better, but she was different, that was all. She had come from a town, Miss Jennie Orton, aged seventeen, and she was spending the winter with the family of her uncle. Her own people were neither better off nor counted superior in any way to those she was now among, but she had a town way with her, a certain something, and was to the boys a most attractive creature. There was nothing wonderful about her—that is, there wouldn't be to you or me—but she was a bright girl and a good one, and she awed Jack Burrows. A girl of seventeen is ten years older than a boy of eighteen, and in this case the added fact that the girl had lived in town and the boy had not, but added to the natural disparity. Jack had made some sturdy but shy advances which had been well enough received—in her heart Jennie thought him an excessively fine fellow—but being a male, and young, and lacking the sight which sees, he failed to take this graciousness at its full

value. He had ventured to become her escort on the occasion of this sleigh ride or of that, but when all were crowded together by twos in the big straw-carpeted box, on the red bob-sleds, and the bells were jangling and the woods were slipping by and the bright stars overhead seemed laughing at something going on beneath them, his arm—to its shame be it said—had failed to steal about her waist, nor had he dared to touch his lips to hers, beneath the hooded shelter of the great buffalo robe which curled protectingly around them. He would as soon have dared such familiarity with the minister's maiden sister, aged forty-two and prim as a Bible book-mark. Yet Jennie was just the sort of girl whom a cold-blooded expert must have declared as really meriting a kiss, when prudent and fairly practicable for the kisser and kissee, and as possessing just the sort of waist to be fitted handsomely by a good, strong arm. Jack, full of fun and ordinarily plucky enough—he had kissed other girls and had licked Jim Bigelow for saying Jennie Orton put on town airs—was simply in a funk. He could not bring himself to a manly wooing point. He was not without a resolve in the matter, for he was a determined youth, but in this callow strait of his, he was weakling enough to resort to devious methods. He wore no willow; he lost no weight. But the spell of love which warps us was upon him, and he swerved from the straight line, though bent upon his conquest. He

was resolved to have that arm of his about sweet Jennie's waist somehow, if he died for it, but with discretion. He would not offend her for the world. So he fell to plotting.

There had come a deep snow, and then the heavens had opened and there had followed a great rain. The schoolhouse stood on the crest of a hill and by it the highway ran down a steep slope and right across the flats, and the road, raised three feet higher than the low lands which it crossed, showed darkly just above the water. Then came snow again, and the road showed next a straight white band across the water. And now had come some colder weather, and ice had formed above the waiting waters which spread out so in all directions. What skating there would be! The boys had tried the ice, but it was coy and threatening, not yet quite safe to venture forth upon. It was what the boys called "India-rubber ice"; ice which would bend beneath their tread, but would not quite support them when they stopped. It would be all right, they said, in just a day or two. To venture recklessly upon its surface now was but to drop through two feet deep of water. And water beneath the ice in early March is cold upon the flats. In the interval there would be, at recess and at noontime, great sport in sliding down the hill.

The jumper, which, as already said, was a marvel of stoutness and dimensions, was the work chiefly of Jack, but he had been assisted in the

labor by Billy Coburg, his chosen friend and ally in all emergencies. Billy was as good as gold, a fat fellow with yellow hair and a red face, full of ingenious devices, stanch in his friendship, and as fond of fun as of eating, in which last field he was eminently great. In the possession of some one of the boys was a thick, old-fashioned novel of the yellow-covered type, entitled, "Rinard, the Red Revenger," and Billy had followed the record of the murderous pirate chieftain with the greatest gusto, and had insisted upon bestowing his title upon the jumper. So it came that the Red Revenger was the pride and comfort of the school, and Jack Burrows, as he looked up from his algebra and out the window at it in the frost-fringed morning hour, rather congratulated himself upon its general style. They'd had a lot of fun with it. His eyes wandered to the ice-covered flats and the narrow roadway stretching white across them. What a time they had yesterday keeping the jumper on the track, and what a shrewd device they had for steering! A hole had been bored down through the heel of each thick runner, and on each aft corner of the jumper had a boy been stationed armed with a sharpened hickory stick. To swerve the jumper to the left, the boy on the right but pressed his stick down through the hole beneath him, and the sharp point scraping along the ice-covered ground, must slow the jumper as desired. And so, on the other side, when the jumper threat-

ened to go off the roadway to the left, the boy on that side acted. It was a great invention and a necessary one. What would happen if that jumper, loaded with boys and girls, should leave the track just now? Jack chuckled as he thought of it. With its broad, sustaining runners, and with impetus once gained by its sheer descent, for what a distance must it speed upon that India-rubber ice before it finally broke through! What a happening then! The moderately bad boy's countenance was radiant as the contemplation of this catastrophe came upon him with its rounded force. He turned his face, and his gaze fell upon the trim figure of Jennie Orton on the other side of the room. How things go. There was an instant association of ideas between girl and jumper. The young fellow's face became first bright, and then most shrewdly thoughtful. School was dismissed for the noon hour. And then, after the lunches had been eaten, Jack Burrows went outside with Billy Coburg.

"Hi-yah! Jack and Billy are just going to start down hill on the jumper! Look at 'em show off their steering!" yelled a small boy, and the pupils rushed to the windows and out at the door. The jumper had just started.

One at each rear corner of the big sled sat Jack and Billy, each with a sharpened stick in hand, and thrust down strongly through the bored hole in the runner. The jumper started slowly, then, gaining

speed, rushed down the hill like a thunderbolt, the hardened snow screaming beneath in its grating passage. The road below was entered fairly, and deftly steered, the Red Revenger skimmed away and away into the far distance. It was an exhilarating sight. Then, a little later, pulling the jumper easily behind them and up the hill again, came Jack and Billy, and shouted out loudly and enthusiastically the proposition that everybody should come out and go down the hill with the biggest load the jumper had ever carried.

The pupils, big and little, swarmed out in a crowd, all inclined, if not to ride, at least to see the sweeping descent under circumstances so favorable. Some of the larger girls hesitated, but Billy especially was earnest in his pleading that the trip should be the big one of the winter, and that they must see how many the Red Revenger could carry at one swoop. And finally all consented. A look of relief and satisfaction flashed across the face of Jack as Jennie got on with the rest, though there was nothing strange in that, joining as she always did with the other pupils in their various sports. The laden jumper was a sight for a mountain packer or a steerage passenger agent or a street car magnate to see and enjoy most mightily. It was loaded and overloaded. The larger girls, as became their dignity, were seated in the middle, and close behind them were the smaller children. In front was a mass of boys of varying ages. "On

account of there isn't much room," said Billy, "you'll have to cord up," and so three boys lay down on the huge sled crosswise, three lay in the other direction across them, and three again across these latter. It was a little hard on those underneath, but they didn't mind it. Behind were Jack and Billy as steerers, and three or four more stood up on the sides and hung on to the others. There were twenty-three in all, every pupil attending the school that day.

All was ready. "On account of the road's so smooth, she'll be a hummer," said Billy.

"Let her go," ordered Jack. A kick and the jumper was off.

Slowly, almost imperceptibly at first, moved the big sled, borne hard to the ground by such a burden. No one was alarmed. But as it slid downward, the jumper gathered way, and faster and faster it went, and the sound from beneath changed from a shrill grating to a menacing roar, and the thing seemed like a big something launched downward from a huge catapult at the narrow strip of road across the ice. With set teeth sat Jack and Billy at their stakes, each steering carefully and well. There was no swerve. The road was entered upon deftly with a rush, and out upon it sped the monster. Then Jack said quietly, "Look out, Billy!" Billy looked across at him and grinned, but uttered never a word nor made a move as they tore along. But there was a sudden movement

on Jack's part, and his stake bore down hardly through the hole in the runner. The flying jumper trembled and swayed, and then like a flash left the roadway and darted down upon and away across the ice.

There was one shriek from the girls, and then all was quiet. "Whish!" That was all as the jumper shot out over the glass-like surface. The ice bent into a valley, but the Red Revenger was away before the break came. It seemed as if the wild, fierce flight would never cease. But there is an end to all things, and at last came a diminution of the jumper's speed. Slower and slower moved the thing, then came a pause and sudden quivering, and then a crash beneath and all about, and the jumper, with its living load, dropped to the bottom! There was no tragedy complete. The water came up just to the side rails and no further.

For fifteen or twenty feet on every side the ice bobbed up and down in floating fragments, and beyond that, where it still remained intact, it would support no one stepping out upon it from the water. It was "India-rubber ice" no longer; it was cracked and brittle to the very shore. That the jumper had careered out so far into the flats was because of its velocity alone. There it stood, an island in a sea of ice water; not a desert island, exactly, either. It was populated—very densely populated. It was populated several deep, and now from its inhabitants went up a dreadful howl.

There was no visible means of escape from the surface of the Red Revenger. The boys who had been "corded" managed to change their positions somehow, and stood where they had got upon their feet, holding themselves together, and the girls and younger children sat stupefied in the positions they had held when coming down the hill, from the throats of the latter going up the lively wail referred to. Billy looked across at Jack and grinned again, this time with great solemnity, and Jack himself looked just a trifle grave.

"Bang! rat-tat-tat! whack!" sounded from the schoolhouse, and the faces of the younger children paled. The noon hour had reached its end, and the schoolmaster was sounding his usual call. No bells summoned the pupils at this rural place of learning, but instead, at recess and at noon time the pedagogue came to the door and hammered loudly with his ruler upon the clapboards there beside him. Very grim was this same schoolmaster, and unfortunate was the pupil who came into the room a laggard after that harsh summons had rung out across the fields and flats. There stood the schoolmaster—he could be seen from the Red Revenger—and it was not difficult even at that distance to imagine the ominous look upon his face. Again and again came forth the wooden call, and then the schoolmaster stepped out into the roadway. He looked about inquiringly. He came to the top of the hill, from whence, off in the flats, the jumper

and its load were plainly seen, and then he paused. It was clear that he was puzzled and was meditating. He called out hoarsely:

"What do you mean? What are you doing? Come in, and come now!"

There was no mistaking the quality of that sharp summons. It meant business, and in all probability it meant trouble, too, for somebody; trouble of strictly personal, as well as of a physical character. There was no reply for a moment, and then Billy, the reprobate, grinning again at Jack, and giving to his voice a tone intended to be a compound of profound respect and something like unlimited despair, bawled out:

"We can't!"

The teacher descended the hill with all firmness and sedateness; he looked like a ramrod, or a poker, or anything stiff and straight, and suggestive of unpleasantness. He followed the roadway until just opposite the jumper, and then surveying the scene with an angry eye, commanded all to return to the schoolhouse on the moment. Here the situation became acute. It was Jack's turn now to make things clear. That villain rose to the occasion gallantly. He shouted out an explanation of how the jumper had happened, by the merest accident in the world, to leave the roadway, and had gone out so far upon the India-rubber ice; how the final catastrophe had taken place, and how helpless they all were in their present condition.

The road could be reached only by a wade of a hundred yards through two feet deep of ice water—more in places—breaking the ice as an advance was made. It would be an awful undertaking, the death almost of the little children, and dangerous to all. What should they do? And the rascal's voice grew full of trouble and apprehension. Fortunately for him, the teacher was too far off to note the expression on his face.

The czar of winter did not wait long. He started off, and was over the hill again and out of sight within the next three minutes, and it was clear that he was going somewhere for assistance. Then some of the other boys wanted to know what was to be done, and Billy looked at Jack inquiringly.

"Well, on account of the fix we're in, what's going to happen next?"

Jack, somehow, did not seem undetermined. He answered promptly: "What is going to happen is this: The teacher has gone over to Mapleson's for help. He might as well have stayed in the schoolhouse. They can't drive a wagon in here, and the ice is so thin, and is cracked so, they can't even put planks out upon it. They can't help us in any way. What shall we do? Why, we can't stay here all night and freeze. Somebody's got to break a path to the shore, that's all, and then we've got to wade out, and the sooner we do it the better."

The smaller children began to cry; the older

boys growled; the big girls shuddered; Billy grinned.

"There's no reason why everybody should get wet," broke out Jack, suddenly. "Here! I'll break a way to the road myself, and carry one of the youngsters. We'll see how it goes."

He caught up one of the little children and stepped off into the ice-packed water. Ugh! but it was cold, and he set his teeth hard. He floundered over to where the unbroken ice began, and then raising his feet alternately above its edge, he crushed it downward. It was not physically a great task for this strong fellow, but it was not a swift one, and the water was deadly cold. His blood was chilling, but the roadway was reached at last. He set the child down quickly, told it to run to the schoolhouse and stand beside the stove, and then himself began running up and down the road to get his blood in fuller circulation. Into the water he plunged again and reached the Red Revenger. "Here," he said, "each one of you big fellows carry some one ashore. Jump in, quick!"

The boys hesitated, and went into the water in a gingerly way, but did very well, the plunge once taken, and Jack apportioned to each of them his burden. The procession waded off boisterously but shudderingly. As for Jack himself, he got one youngster clinging about his neck and another perched upon each hip, and then waded off with the rest. There were left on the jumper but two

more of the small children, and Jennie. That was Jack's shrewdness. He was well spent and shaky when he reached the shore this time.

He put the children down and turned to Billy. "B-b-illy," he chattered, "will you go back with me, and will you bring ashore those two kids?"

Billy looked a trifle dismal. He had just set down upon the roadway the girl he liked best, and he wanted to go to the schoolhouse with her. Added to this he was awfully cold. But he was faithful.

"On account of you've done more than your share I'll go you," he decided.

They went out again, out through that dreadful hundred yards of icy flood, and Billy marched off with the children, and then Jack reached out his hands, though hesitatingly. He was bashful still, despite the emergency his villainy had made. As for Jennie, she did not hesitate. She stepped up close to him, was taken in his arms like a baby, and the journey began. What a trip it was for Jack! There she was, clinging fast to him, and he with his arms close about her! Who said that the water was cold? It was just right — never was more delightful water! And she didn't seem to dislike the journey either. She even seemed to cuddle a little. He wished it were a mile to land. Hooray!

And the road was reached at last, and the blushing and beaming young lady set down upon her feet. She didn't say anything but reached out

her hand to Jack, and led him on a run to the schoolhouse. The fire had been kindled into roaring strength by those first to reach the place, and all the soaked ones gathered about the stove and steamed there into relative degrees of dryness. Jack steamed with the rest, but he was in a dream—one of the blissful type.

In time the teacher returned, and with him a farmer and his hired man, and a team and a wagon-load of plank, too late for aid, even had aid been practicable. There was no school that afternoon. The teacher could not accuse any one of fault, nor blame the pupils that they had hesitated when he called them; while, on the other hand, he was deterred from saying anything commendatory of the waders. He suspected something, he couldn't tell exactly what, and he didn't propose to commit himself. The most he could do was to recognize the fact that the big boys should get to their homes as soon as possible and dry their boots and stockings. He dismissed the pupils, and so that eventful day was ended. Jack's boots were full of dampness still, and his feet were chilly, but as he walked home he walked on air.

The succeeding night was one of bitter cold, and the morning saw the ice upon the flats no longer yielding, but so thick and solid that wagons might be driven upon it anywhere without a risk. Even the lately opened space about the partly submerged jumper was frozen over, and the top of the Red

Revenger showed where that interesting but ill-fated craft was fixed for some time to come. "On account of she's frozen in so deep, we'd better let 'er stay there," commented Billy; and so coasting, save upon ordinary sleds, was discontinued for the season. It was pretty near spring, anyhow.

The frost-decorated windows of the schoolhouse blazed in the morning sun, and was a glory on the heads of the girls. But no head was so bright, in the opinion of Jack Burrows, as that of Jennie Orton. Her brown hair gleamed like gold, and as for the rest of her—well he thought as he looked across the room, there was nothing to improve. It seemed hardly possible that only the afternoon before he had held that creature in his arms and carried her so three hundred feet or more. It was all true, though, and Jennie had smiled across at him just now. He was more deeply in love than ever, but his timidity had somehow much abated. She was as beautiful as ever, but she seemed more human. He felt that he could speak to her, make love to her, as he might to another girl. Of course he couldn't do it very confidently, but he could venture, and he resolved to ask leave to bring her to the spelling school that very evening. He did so, pluckily, at recess, and she consented.

As they were walking home that night, they fell naturally to talking of the grewsome adventure of the day before; and Jennie asked Jack, innocently, to explain to her the method by which he

and Billy were accustomed to steer the Red Revenger. He explained fluently and with some pride, and she listened with close attention. When he had done she remained silent for a few moments, and then said quietly:

"You did it on purpose."

The young man was dazed. He could say nothing at first, but managed finally to blunder out:

"How did you know that?"

"I saw you and Billy look at each other, and saw you push down hard on the stake. Why did you do it?"

Jack was truthful at least, and, furthermore, he had perception keen enough to see that in his present strait was afforded opportunity for speaking to the point on a subject he had feared to venture. He was reckless now.

"I wanted to carry you ashore in my arms," he said.

There was, as any thoughtful girl would admit, really nothing in all this for Jennie to get very angry over, and, to do her credit, it must be added that she showed no anger at all. Of the details of what more was said, information is unfortunately and absolutely lacking, but certain it is that before Jennie's home was reached Jack's arm had found a place not very far from that which it had occupied the afternoon before.

They marry young in the country, but seventeen and eighteen are ages, which, even on the farm,

are not considered sufficiently advanced for such grave venture, and so, though Jack's wooing prospered famously, there was no wedding in the spring. There was the most trustful and delightful of understandings, though, and three years later Jennie came from the town to live permanently on the farm, and her name was changed to Burrows.

"On account of the Red Revenger was a pirate craft, and took to the water naturally, Jack got braced up to begin his courting, and so got married," said Billy, in explanation of the event.

A MURDERER'S ACCOMPLICE

IT is part of my good fortune in life to know a beautiful and lovable woman. She is as sweet, it seems to me, as any woman can be who has come into this world. She is good. She is not very rich, but she helps the needy as far as she can from her moderate purse. I have known her to attend at the bedside of a poor dying person when the doctor had told her that the trouble might be smallpox. I should say, at a venture, that this woman will go to heaven when she dies. But she will not go to heaven unless ignorance is an excuse for wickedness. If she does go there, it must be as the savage goes who knows no better than to do things which thoughtful people, to whom what is good has been taught, count as cruel and merciless. As the savage is a murderer, so is she the accomplice of a murderer, although it is possible that by the Great Judge neither may be so classified at the end, because of their lack of knowing.

I met this lovable woman on the street the other day, and we walked and talked together. She had only good in her heart in all she was planning to do. She had taste for outlines and color, and she was very fair to look upon. Her dress—"tailor-

made," I think the women call it—set off her perfect figure to advantage, and her hat was a symmetrical completion of the whole effect. It was a neat, well-proportioned whole, the woman and her toilet, which I, being a man, of course, cannot describe. One of her adornments was the head, breast, and wing of a Baltimore oriole, worn in her hat.

I met this same woman again a day or two ago in another garb not less charming and artistic. We ate luncheon together, and it made life worth living to be with a creature so fair and good. In her hat this time was a touch of the sky when it lies over a great lake. It was the wing of a bluebird.

I know—or knew—four birds, and to know a fair bird well is almost equal to knowing a fair woman well, though they have different ways. Two of these birds that I knew were orioles and two were bluebirds. The two orioles and the two bluebirds were husbands and wives. I stumbled upon them all last year. The bluebirds had a nest in a hole in a hard maple stump in a clearing in St. Clair County, Michigan. The orioles' nest was well woven in pear shape, dangling from close-swinging twigs at the end of an elm limb which hung over a creek in Orange County, Indiana. The male oriole attended faithfully to the wants of his soberer-hued wife sitting upon the four eggs in their nest. He was gorgeous all over, in his orange and black, and as

faithfully and gallantly as the male bluebird did he regard his mate, and he was, if possible, even more jealous and watchful in his unwearied care of her.

They made two very happy and earnest families. Each male, in addition to caring for his mate, did good in the world for men and women. Each killed noxious worms and insects for food, and each, in the very exuberance of the flush year, and of living, gave forth at times such music that all men, women, and children who listened, though they might be dull and ignorant, somehow felt better, and were better as well as happier human beings. But there was death in the air. The male oriole and the male bluebird had each a brilliant coat!

Young were hatched in each of these two nests—vigorous, clamoring young, coming from the eggs of the beautiful bird couples. The father and mother oriole and the father and mother bluebird, each pair vain and prettily jubilant over what had happened, worked very hard to bring food to the open mouths of their offspring. The young ones were growing and flourishing, and they were all happy.

One day, in St. Clair County, Michigan, a man armed with a shotgun went out into a clearing. The shot in the gun was of the kind known as "mustard-seed." It is so fine that it will not mar the feathers of the bird it kills. On the same day, possibly, or at least very nearly at the same time,

a man similarly armed strolled down beside a creek in Orange County, Indiana. The man in Michigan wanted to kill the beautiful male bluebird who was bringing food to his young ones. The man in Indiana wanted to kill the magnificent male oriole who was feeding his young birds in the nest. It was not difficult for either of these two brutes to kill the two happy bird fathers. They were business-like butchers, just of the type of man who make the dog-catchers in cities—and they had no nerves and shot well. One of them took home a beautiful dead oriole, and the other took not one but two beautiful bluebirds, for as the male bluebird came back to the nest with food for the younglings, it so chanced that the female came also, and the same charge of shot killed them both.

"She isn't quite as purty as the he-bird," said the man, as he picked up the two, "but maybe I can get a little something for her."

The man who shot the oriole would have gladly committed and profited by a similar double murder had the mother bird happened upon the scene when he shot her orange-and-black mate.

These two slayers, who carried shotguns loaded with "mustard-seed" shot, went out after the beautiful birds, because from Chicago and New York had come into their country certain men who represented great millinery furnishing houses, and these men had left word with local dealers in the country towns that they would pay money for the beautiful

feathers of bluebirds and orioles and other birds. The little local dealers were promised a profit on all such spoils sent by them to the great city dealers, and they had set the men with the shot-guns at work. Mating time and nesting time are the times for murdering birds, because at that season not only is their plumage finest, but the birds are more easily to be found and killed. It is then that they sing their clearest and strongest notes of joy; then, that they hover constantly near their nests; and it is very easy to stop their music.

So there remained in the nest in the maple stump four little helpless orphan bluebirds, and in the swaying nest in the elm-tree over the brook were four young orioles with only the mother bird to care for them. The widowed oriole fluttered about and beat her wings against the bushes in vain search for her lost love—for birds love as madly, and, I have sometimes thought, more faithfully than do human beings. But her children clamored, and the oriole had the mother instinct as well as the faithful love in her, and so she went to work for them. She didn't know how to get food for them very well at first, for bird wives and husbands have in some ways the same relations that we human beings have when we are wives and husbands. The male oriole, who had been learning where the insects and worms are, where whatever is good for little birds is, all through the time while the female bird is sitting on the nest, must

necessarily know much more than his wife as to where things to eat for the children may be found nearest and most easily and swiftly. That is the great lesson the male bird learns while the female is sitting on the eggs and maturing into life the new creatures whose birth and being shall make this little loving couple happy in the way the good God has designated one form of happiness shall come to His creatures, be they with or without feathers.

The forlorn mother did as best she could. She fluttered through brakes and bushes seeking food for her young, but her children did not thrive very well. She worked so hard for them—human mothers and bird mothers are very much alike in this way—that she became thin and weak, and with each day that passed she brought less food to the little ones in the wonderfully constructed nest which she and her husband had made in the spring, when the smell of the liverworts was in the air, and muskrats swam together and made love to each other in the creek below. She sometimes, in the midst of her trouble (the trouble which came because my sweet woman must have a bird's feather in her hat) would think of that springtime home-making, and then this poor little widow would give a little bird gasp. That was all. One day she had searched hard for food for her young, for as they grew bigger they demanded more and were more arrogantly hungry. As she perched to rest a

moment upon a twig, beneath which in the grass were a few late dandelions, she felt coming over her a weakness she could not resist. As a matter of fact, the bird mother had been overworked and so killed. Birds, overpressed, die as human beings do. So the mother bird, after a few moments, fell off the twig upon which she had paused for rest, and lay, a pretty little dead thing down in the grass among the dandelions. Then, of course, her children gasped and writhed and clamored in the nest, and at last, almost together, died of starvation.

Days and days before this the history of the bluebird family had ended. The four little bluebirds, being merely helpless young birds, lone and hungry, did nothing for a few hours after their bereavement but call for food, as was a habit of theirs. But nothing came to them—neither their father nor their mother came. They didn't know much except to be hungry, these little bluebirds. They couldn't know much, of course, as young as they were, and being but bird things with stomachs, they just wanted something to eat. They did not even know that if they did not get the food they wanted so much the ants would come and the other creatures of nature, and eat them. But they cried aloud, and more and more faintly, and at last were still. And the ants came. They found four little things with blue feathers just sprouting upon them, particularly upon the wings,

where the growth seemed strongest and bluest, but the four little things were dead. It was all delightful for the ants and the other small things; all good in their way, who came seeking food. The very young birds, which had died gasping, that a woman might wear bright feathers in her hat, were fine eating for the ants.

Of course, one cannot tell very well in detail how a starving young bird dies. It is but a little creature with great possibilities of song and beauty and happiness; but if something big and strong kills its father and mother, then there is nothing for it but to lie back in the nest and open its mouth in vain for food, and then it must finally, a preposterously awfully suffering little lump of flesh and starting feathers, look up at the sky and die in hungry agony. Then the ants come.

The story I have told of the two bird families and how they died is true. Worst of all it is that theirs is a tragedy repeated in reality thousands and thousands of times every year; yet the beautiful woman I tried to describe at the beginning of this account wears birds and their wings on her hat. It is because she and other women wear birds' feathers that these tragic things take place in the woods and clearings and open spaces of God's beautiful world. I say to any woman in all the world that she is wicked if she wears the feather of any of the birds which make the world happier and better for being in it. If women must wear

feathers, there are enough for their adornment from birds used for food, and from the ostrich, which is not injured when its plumes are taken.

So long as my beautiful woman wears the feathers of the bluebird, the oriole, or any other of the singing creatures of God, I call her the accomplice of a murderer. I have talked to her, but somehow I cannot make her listen to the story of what lies back of the feathers on her hat. She is more accustomed to praise than blame. When this is printed I shall send it to her, and it may be that she will read it and grow earnest over it, and that her heart will be touched, and that she will never again deserve the name she merits now.

There are, it is said, certain savages—just barely human beings—called Dyaks. They have become famous to the world as "head-hunters." These Dyaks creep through miles of forest paths and kill as many as they can of another lot of people, and then cut off the heads of the slain and dry them, and hang them up, arranged on lines more or less artistically festooned about the place in which they live. This exhibition of dried and dead human heads seems to make these swart and murderous savages vain and glad. These people are, as we understand, or think we understand, but undeveloped, cruel, bloody-minded human creatures. They prefer dried human heads to delicate ferns showing wonderful outlines, or to brilliant leaves

and fragrant flowers. They have their own ideas concerning decoration.

Upon a dozen or two of the islands in the Southern Pacific, where the waves lap the sloping sands lazily, and life should be calm and peaceful, there are, or were until lately, certain people who occasionally killed certain other people for reasons sufficiently good, no doubt, to them; and who thus coming into possession of a group of dead creatures with fingers, conceived the idea that the fingers of these dead, when dried, would make most artistic, not to say suggestive, necklaces. So they strung these dried fingers upon something strong and pliant, and wore them with much pride.

When I see the bright feathers of birds, slain that hats may be garnished for the thoughtless females of a higher grade of beings, I am reminded somehow of the Dyaks and of the wearers of the necklaces made of fingers.

A MID-PACIFIC FOURTH

THE sun shone very fairly on a green hillside, from which could be seen the town of Honolulu, the capital of Hawaii. The sun makes some very fair efforts at shining upon and around those islands lying thousands of miles out in the Pacific Ocean. He was doing his best on this particular morning, and under his influence, so brightening everything, two little boys and a little jackass were having a good time near a long, low, rakish, but far from piratical-looking house upon the hillside already mentioned. One of the boys was white, one of the boys was brown, and the little jackass was gray. The name of the white boy was William Harrison, though he was always called Billy, and his father, an American merchant in Honolulu, owned the house near which the boys were playing. The name of the brown boy was Manua Loa, or something like that, but he was always called Cocoanut, the nickname agreeing perfectly with his general solid, nubbinish appearance. The name of the jackass was Julius Cæsar, but he wore almost no facial resemblance to his namesake. The date of the day on which the little boys and the little jackass were out there together was July 3, 1897.

As far as the three playmates were concerned, there was a practical equality in their relations between Billy and Cocoanut and Julius Cæsar. Billy's father was a rich white man, but Cocoanut's father was a native and of some importance, too; and as for Julius Cæsar he was quite capable at times of asserting his own standing among the trio. He could be, on occasions, one of the most animated kicking little jackasses living upon this globe, upon which the moon doesn't shine quite as well as the sun does. On the occasion here referred to the little jackass stood apart with head hanging down toward the ground, silent and unmoving, and apparently revolving in his own mind something concerning the geology of the Dog Star. He could be a most reflective little beast upon occasion. The boys sat together on a knoll, their heads close together, engaged in earnest and animated and sometimes loud-voiced conversation. There was occasion for their lively interest. They were discussing the Fourth of July. They were about equally ardent, but if there were any difference it was in favor of Cocoanut, who, within the year, had become probably the most earnest American citizen upon the face of the civilized globe. His information regarding the United States and American citizenship had, of course, been derived from Billy, who had derived it from his father; and Billy's father had told Billy, who in turn had told Cocoanut, that by the next Fourth of July the

Stars and Stripes would be flying from the flagstaffs of Hawaii, and that then, on the Fourth, small boys could celebrate just as small boys did in the United States. Thenceforth Billy and Cocoanut observed the flags above Honolulu closely, but neither of them had ever seen the Stars and Stripes lying flattened out aloft by the sea breeze. They had faith, though, and their faith had been justified by their works. They had between them, as the result of much begging from parents and doing a little work occasionally, gathered together probably the most astonishing supply of firecrackers ever possessed by two boys of their size and degree of understanding. There were package upon package of the small, ordinary Chinese firecrackers, and there were a dozen or two of the big "cannon" firecrackers which have come into vogue of late years, and the first manufacturer of whom should be taken out somewhere and hanged with all earnestness. They were now consulting regarding the morrow. Would the flag fly over Honolulu and could they celebrate? They didn't know, but they had a degree of faith. Then they wandered off somewhere with Julius Cæsar and had a good time all day, but ever the morrow was in their mind.

It was early the next morning when the two boys and Julius Cæsar were again on the point of hill overlooking Honolulu. It was so early that the flags had not yet been hoisted over the public build-

ings. Each boy carried a package, and these they unrolled and laid out together. The display was something worth looking at. Any boy who could see that layout of firecrackers and not feel a kind of a tingling run over him resembling that which comes when he takes hold of the two handles of an electrical machine wouldn't be a boy worth speaking of. He wouldn't be the sort of a boy who had it in him to ever become President of the United States, or captain of a baseball nine, or anything of that sort. But these two boys quivered. Cocoanut quivered more than Billy did.

Silently the two boys and Julius Cæsar awaited the raising of the flags over Honolulu. Could they or could they not let off their firecrackers? They might as well, said Cocoanut, be getting ready, anyhow, and so he began tying strings of firecrackers together, adjusting cannon crackers at intervals between the smaller ones, and adding Billy's string of crackers to his own. When completed there were just thirty-seven and one-half feet of firecrackers of variegated quality. Billy looked on listlessly, and Cocoanut himself hardly knew why he was making this arrangement. The sun bounced up out of the ocean, a great red ball behind the thin fog, and bunting climbed the flagstaffs of Honolulu. With eager eyes the boys gazed cityward until the moment when the breeze had straightened out the flags and the device upon them could be seen. Then they looked upon each other

blankly. It was not the Stars and Stripes, but the Hawaiian flag which floated there below them!

They didn't know what to do, these poor boys who wanted to be patriots that morning and couldn't. They sat down disconsolately near to the heels of Julius Cæsar, who was whisking his stubby tail about occasionally in vengeful search of an occasional fly. It chanced that in the midst of this he slapped Cocoanut across the face, and that Cocoanut incontinently grabbed the tail, to keep it from further demonstration of the sort. Julius Cæsar did not kick at this, because it was too trifling a matter. Far better would it have been for Julius Cæsar had he kicked then and there, but the relation of why comes later on. Lost in their sorrows, Cocoanut and Billy communed together, and Cocoanut, in the forgetfulness of deep reflection began plaiting together the end of the string of firecrackers and the hairs in the tail of Julius Cæsar. He was a good plaiter, was Cocoanut—they do such work with grasses and things in and about Honolulu, and lots of little Hawaiians are good plaiters—and it may be said of the job that when completed, although done almost unconsciously, it was a good one. That string of thirty-seven and one-half feet of firecrackers was not going to leave the tail of that little jackass except under most extraordinary circumstances.

A fly of exceptional vigor assaulted Julius Cæsar upon the flank, and his tail not whisking

as well as usual, because of the incumbrance, he missed the enemy at the first swish and moved uneasily forward for several feet. As it chanced, this movement left the other string of firecrackers fairly in the lap of Cocoanut. The boys were still discussing the situation.

"It's too bad; it's too bad," said Billy. "What'll we do?"

"I don't know," said Cocoanut.

"Do you think we dare let 'em off even if the flag didn't fly?" said Billy.

"I don't know," said Cocoanut.

"I believe I'll get on Julius Cæsar and ride a little," said Billy, "and you throw stones at him and hit him if you can. It's pretty hard to make him run, you know."

"All right," said Cocoanut.

Billy rose and wandered over and mounted Julius Cæsar, Cocoanut barely turning his head and watching the white boy lazily as Billy gathered up the bridle, which was the only equipment Julius Cæsar had. It was then, just as Billy had fairly settled himself down, that an inspiration came to Cocoanut.

"Lemme let off just one little cracker," he said. "Mebbe it'll start Julius Cæsar a-going," and Billy joyously assented.

Now Cocoanut had never seen the effect which a whole string of firecrackers can produce. He had assisted in firing one or two little ones, and that

was all he knew about it. Billy didn't know that the string of firecrackers was attached to the tail of Julius Cæsar, and Cocoanut himself had absolutely forgotten it. Cocoanut produced a match and lit it and carefully ignited the thin, papery end of the ultimate little cracker on the string, and it smoked away and flickered and sputtered toward its object.

There have been various exciting occasions upon the island whereon is Honolulu. There have been some great volcanic explosions there, and earthquakes and tidal waves. It is to be doubted, however, if upon that charming island ever occurred anything more complete and alarming and generally spectacular, in a small way, than followed the moment when the first cracker exploded of that string of thirty-seven and one-half feet attached to the tail of Julius Cæsar. Cocoanut had expected one cracker to go off, but had anticipated nothing further. He was correct in his view, only as regarded the mere going-off of the cracker. What followed was a surprise to him and to all the adjacent world. There was a rattle and roar; the first two or three feet of small crackers went off; and then, as the first cannon cracker was reached with a thunder and blast of smoke, Cocoanut went over backward and away off into the grass, while Julius Cæsar simply launched himself into space. It was all down-hill before him. He started for Australia. Anybody could see that. You couldn't tell whether he was going for Sydney or Melbourne, but you

knew he was going for Australia in a general way. His leaps, assisted by the down-hill course, were something to witness. Cocoanut has since estimated them at forty feet a jump, while Billy says sixty—for both boys, it is good to say, are still alive—but then Billy was on the jackass and may have been excited; probably somewhere, say about fifty feet, would be the correct estimate. Talk about your horrifying comets with their tails of fire! They were but slight affairs, locally considered, for terrific explosions accompanied every jump of Julius Cæsar, and comets don't make any noise. It was all swift, but the noise and awful appearance of Billy and Julius Cæsar sufficed in a minute to startle such of the populace of Honolulu who were already awake, and there was a wild rush of scores of people in the wake of where Billy and Julius Cæsar went downward to the sea. The extent of the leap of Julius Cæsar when he finally reached the shore has never been fully decided upon, but it was a great leap. Billy, jackass, and fireworks went down like a plummet, and very soon thereafter Billy and jackass, but no fireworks, came to the surface again, and then swam vigorously toward the shore, for everybody and everything in Hawaii can swim like a duck. They were received by a brown and wildly applauding crowd of natives, and a minute or two later by Cocoanut, who had run like a deer to see the end of the vast performance he had inaugurated.

An hour or two later two boys and a little jackass were all together upon the hill again, the boys excited and jubilant and saying that they'd had a Fourth of July, anyhow, and the jackass in a doubtful and thoughtful mood.

The boys have grown amazingly since. The jackass seems to be about the same. But about the Fourth of July next at hand the boys won't have the same trouble they had in 1897.

LOVE AND A LATCH-KEY

THIS is the story of the circumstances surrounding the invention of Simpson's Electric Latch-Key, an invention with which everybody is now familiar, but regarding the origin of which the public has never been informed. There were reasons, grave ones for a time, why the story should not be told—in short, there was a love affair mixed with it—but those reasons no longer exist, and it seems a good thing to relate the facts in the case. They may interest a great number of people, particularly middle-aged gentlemen in the large cities. I know that for me, at least, they have possessed no little attraction.

Love proverbially laughs at locksmiths, but it is safe to say that before Simpson's Electric Latch-Key was known even that cheerful god would not have dared to smile in the presence of some of the problems connected with locks and keys. Now all is changed. The general use of the latch-key mentioned has increased the gayety of nations since the recent time in which this story is laid. Otherwise there would be no story to tell, as this is but the plain narration of the love and ambition which

inspired, perfected, and triumphantly demonstrated the usefulness of the invention.

The North Side in the city of Chicago may put on airs as a residence district, and the South Side may put on airs as containing the heart of the vast business district of Chicago, but the West Side is as big as the two of them, and its population contains a large number of exceedingly rich men, who, like the rich men of the other sides, are as content with themselves for being "self-made," are just as grumpy, and with as many weaknesses. Some of these West Side rich men live on Ashland Avenue. There certainly lived and lives Mr. Jason B. Grampus, a great speculator, whose home has its palatial aspects.

West Side millionaires, like those on the other sides, are not infrequently the fathers of fair daughters. Sometimes they have only one daughter, and no sons at all, and in such cases the daughter becomes a very desirable acquisition for a young man of tact and enterprise. There is no law of nature which makes a millionaire's daughter less really lovable than other young women, and there is no law of nature which makes a young man who may fall in love with her, even though he be poor, a fortune-hunter and a blackguard. The young man who has a social position without money is in a perilous way. He may fall in love with a young woman with money, and then his motives will be impugned, especially by the par-

ents. It depends altogether on the young man how he accepts the more or less anomalous position described. If he be strong, he adapts himself in one way; if he be weak, he does it in another.

Ned Simpson was not of the weaker sort, and he was desperately in love with the daughter of "old man Grampus." The fact that she would eventually be worth more than a million did not affect his love to its injury. He said frankly to himself that she was none the worse for that, but it must be asserted to his credit that he thought of her prospective money very little. He stood ready to take her penniless, on the instant. Unfortunately, he could not take her on any conditions. Mr. Grampus and Mrs. Grampus stood like mountains in his way.

Not that Simpson lacked social equality with the Grampus family. He was a young stockbroker, with expectations as yet unrealized, it is true, but with a good ancestry and with business popularity. By day he met old Grampus upon terms of equality. Old Grampus liked him, after a fashion. He had visited the Grampus house, had dined there often, had met the old lady with the purring ways, had met, also, the radiant daughter, Sylvia, and had fallen in love with the latter, deeply and irrevocably. He had made love cleverly and earnestly, as a fine man should, and had succeeded wonderfully.

Sylvia was as deeply in love with him as he was with her. They had solemnly and in all honesty

entered into an agreement that they would remain true, each to the other, no matter what might come. Then he had approached the father, manfully explained the situation, and had encountered a reception which was a sight to see and an amazing thing to hear. The old man was striking when at his worst, and Simpson almost admired him for his command of explosive expletives. One likes to see almost anything done well. Simpson was ordered never to enter the house again. He contained himself pretty well; he made no promises, but he met that young woman almost every evening. Meanwhile, the young man and the old man met daily in a business way.

As a rule, the relations between a lover who has been figuratively kicked out of a house and the man who has figuratively kicked him out are somewhat strained. Still, young Simpson and old Grampus met down town in a business way, and it is only putting it fairly concerning Simpson to say that he showed a forgiving spirit—almost an impudently forgiving spirit, one might say. Light-hearted and careless as he seemed to be among his business associates, Simpson possessed a resolute character, and when he decided upon a course, adhered to it determinedly. He was not going to be desperate; he was not going overseas to "wed some savage woman, who should rear his dusky race"; but he was going to eventually have Miss Grampus, or know the reason why. He did not want to elope

with the young woman; in fact, he felt that she wouldn't elope if he asked her, for she was fond of her father, and he knew that his end must be attained by vast diplomacy. Just how, he had not decided upon. But he felt his way vaguely.

"One thing is certain," he said to himself, "I must keep my temper and cultivate the old man."

He did cultivate Mr. Grampus, and did it so well that after a season the two would even lunch together. It was an anomalous happening, this lunching together, of a poor young man with a rich old one, who had refused a daughter's hand; but such things occur in the grotesque, huge Western money-mart. In Chicago there is a great gulf fixed between business and family relations. Grampus began to consider Simpson an excellent fellow—that is, as one to meet at luncheon, not as a son-in-law. A son-in-law should have money.

There was a skeleton in the Grampus closet, but it was not scandalous, and was never mentioned. Still, to old Mr. Grampus, the guilty one, the skeleton was real and terrible. He, the gruff, overbearing, successful man of business, the one beneath whose gaze clerks shuddered and stenographers turned pale, was afraid to go home at least four nights of the seven nights in the week. He was afraid to meet his wife.

A great club man was Mr. Grampus. He delighted in each evening spent with his old cronies, in the whist-playing, the reminiscences, the story-

telling, the arguments, and the moderate smoking and drinking. Unfortunately, he could not endure well the taking into his system of anything alcoholic. He always became perfectly sober within three hours, but a punch or two would give a certain flaccidity to his legs, and when he reached his home the broad steps leading up to the vestibule seemed Alpine-like and perilous. He would almost say to himself, "Beware the pine-tree's withered branch, beware the awful avalanche." But after all it was not the danger of the ascent which really troubled him; it was what would assuredly happen after he had reached the summit. The disaster always came upon the plateau.

The man could fumble in his pockets with much discretion, and could always find his latch-key, for its shape was odd, but with that latch-key he could not find the keyhole in the door. There came a clamor always at the end. When finally he entered, Mrs. Grampus was as alive and alert as any tarantula of an Arizona plain aroused by a noise upon the trap-door of its retreat. And Mrs. Grampus was a wonderful woman. Talk about death's-head! Jason B. Grampus would have welcomed one in place of that pallid creature in a night-dress, who met him when he came in weavingly.

Mrs. Grampus, who was known to her husband's inner consciousness as Sophia, was a slender, blue-eyed woman, soft of voice and by day gentle of manner. Her health was not perfect. She knew

this, and so did every one she met. While not an invalid, she in her imagination trembled on the edge of invalidism, and upon this subject she was almost loquacious. She was domestic in her tastes, and ambitious and devoted to her home and family.

She was a model wife and mother, and this, too, she knew; so did her family and friends, for this subject was second in her topics of conversation only to the state of her health; and, furthermore, she was peculiar and almost original in the perfection to which she had brought the fine art of nagging.

Let it not be imagined that she scolded, or said small, mean things, or used any of the processes of the ordinary nagger. Her methods were refined, studied, calculated, and correct. Her style of day-nagging was, to be explicit, to maintain perfect silence as to the grievance under which she suffered—indeed, this was often a profound secret from the first to the last; to adopt the look and bearing of a Christian martyr on the way to the stake, and to keep this demonstration up for days without a gleam of interruption. She shed no tears, made no reproaches; she just looked her agony, sitting, walking, doing anything. This was by day. But at night! How is it that women so have the gift of speech at night? Mrs. Grampus had it in a marvelous degree, and it was the speech which is a thing to dread, penetrating and long-continued. The nerves of Jason B. Grampus were

gradually giving way. Some of the finest old gentlemen in every large city in the country know that one's physical condition differs with moods and seasons, and that what may be endured at one time cannot be at another. This lesson was brought forcibly to Jason B. Grampus one morning. He had passed his usual evening at the club, had gone home at the usual hour, and had encountered even more difficulty than usual in discovering the key-hole. He made more than the ordinary degree of noise, and had encountered even more than the usual hour or two of purgatory, subsequently. He came down town in the morning heavy-eyed, with a headache, and with spirits undeniably depressed. He sought what relief he could. He first visited the barber, and that deft personage, accustomed, as a result of years of carefully performed duty to the ways and desires of his customer, shaved him with unusual delicacy, keeping cool cloths upon his head during the whole ceremony, and terminating the exercise with a shampoo of the most refreshing character. An extra twenty-five cents was the reward of his devotion.

Mr. Grampus went to his business somewhat improved in physical condition, and by noon was almost himself again. Still, he had a yearning for human sympathy; he could not help it. He saw young Simpson at a table, the only acquaintance who happened to be in the dining-room when he entered, and, led by a sudden impulse, walked

over, sat down opposite the young man whose aspirations he had discouraged, and entered into affable conversation with him. From affability the conversation drifted into absolute confidence. Jason B. Grampus could no more have helped being confidential that day to some one than he could help breathing. He told Simpson of his trouble of the night before, and concluded his account with the earnest and almost pitiful exclamation:

"I'd give fifty thousand dollars for a keyhole one could not miss." Simpson did not reply for a moment. He thought, thought—thought deeply—and then came to him the inspiration of his life. He looked at Grampus half quizzically, but in a manner not to offend, and as if it were merely a jest over a matter already settled, said:

"Would you give your daughter?"

Grampus looked at him puzzled, and then, responding to the joke which seemed but one of hopelessness, he said:

"Well—if I wouldn't!"

He was startled the next second by the uprising of Simpson, who grasped him heartily by the hand, and said:

"I've got the thing! It's a new invention! There is nothing like it in the world! It is going to revolutionize the social relations and make home happy. Write me a note, giving me permission to operate upon your front door!"

The old man sat dazed. It slowly dawned upon

his mind that Simpson had caught him in a trap; but the word of Jason B. Grampus had never yet been violated. He thought rapidly himself now. Of course, the young lunatic could not do what he promised! That was impossible. No man could invent a keyhole which a man could not miss at night. There might be some annoyance to it all, but the young fellow could do as he pleased, only to be rebuffed again, this time with no allowance of a subsequent familiarity. And so they parted, the old man wearing a look somewhat perplexed, and the younger one, despite his assumed jaunty air, exhibiting a little of the same quality of expression.

As a matter of fact, Simpson had not the slightest idea of how such a keyhole and latch-key as he had promised could be made, save that on one occasion he had been the author of a practical little invention utilized in a box-factory, and felt that he had a touch of the inventive genius in his nature. But there was his friend Hastings. It was the thought of Hastings which gave him the inspiration when he spoke to Grampus. Hastings was one of the cleverest inventors and one of the most prominent among the younger electricians of the city. They were devoted friends, and they would invent the greatest latch-key in the world, or burn half the midnight oil upon the market. This he was resolved upon. He sought Hastings.

To Hastings Simpson unfolded his tale carefully,

leaf by leaf, and interested amazingly that eminent young electrician. Hastings, though now married, the possessor of a baby with the reddest face in all Chicago, and perfectly happy, had himself undergone somewhat of an experience in obtaining the mother of that baby, and so sympathized with Simpson deeply.

"We'll invent that keyhole or latch-key, or break something," was all he said. There were thenceforth meetings every evening between the two—meetings which were sometimes far extended into the night; and the outcome of it all was that one morning, just as the sunbeams came thrusting the white fog over blue Lake Michigan, Simpson sought his own room somewhat weary-eyed, but with a countenance which was simply beatific in expression. The invention had been perfected! What that invention was may as well be described here and now. The first object to be sought was, naturally, a keyhole which could not easily be missed. Of course, this is a non-scientific description of it, but it may convey a fair idea to the average reader. First, instead of the ordinary keyhole there was something exactly resembling the customary mouthpiece through which we whistle upstairs from the ground floor of a flat seeking to attract the people who rarely answer. The only difference between it and the ordinary mouthpiece was that it was set in so that it was even with the woodwork of the door, and did not

project at all. This mouthpiece tapered all around inside, and terminated in a keyhole which was rubber-lined. On the other side of this keyhole was a hard surface, padded with rubber, but having just opposite the mouth of the keyhole a small orifice extending through to a metal surface. That metal surface was a section of one of the most powerful horseshoe magnets ever invented in the United States, and was to be imbedded in the woodwork of the door.

It was a huge thing, reaching nearly across the door, and warranted to pull toward it anything magnetic of reasonable dimensions. The keyhole was all the design of Simpson, the electric part of the affair all the invention of Hastings. Combined, they made something beautiful and wonderful.

A key was made and magnetized so thoroughly that never before was a piece of iron so yearningly full of the electric fluid. The whole thing was adjusted against the wall of the room, and then the men brought in the magnetized key to ascertain if their invention would work in practice. Simpson was carrying the key. No sooner had he entered the door than something began to pull him toward the magnet. He walked sideways, like a crab, resistingly, and could not help himself; and then, just as he had nearly reached the bell-shaped keyhole, he was whirled around, as is the end child in a school playground when they are playing "crack-the-whip," fairly in front of the keyhole, and liter-

ally hurled toward it, while the key shot fiercely into the lock. But there was not a sound; the rubber cushion had obviated that.

Well, to say that those two young men were delighted would be to use but one of the commonplace, everyday, decent conversational expressions of the English language. They were simply wild.

Since their latest conversation Jason B. Grampus had engaged in no further communication with Simpson. He thought it best to avoid all relations with the young man who could jest on serious occasions; and yet underlying his upper strata of thought was a dim and undefined impression that he would hear from that young man again. He did.

The morning after the perfection of the invention Simpson called upon Mr. Grampus and calmly, coldly, and dignifiedly announced that his lock was complete, and that he was now about to install it in the Grampus front door. He suggested to Mr. Grampus that to avoid any encounters which might be embarrassing, the latter should suddenly discover some fault in his own front door—in the stained glass, or something of that sort—and have it taken off bodily and sent away to be remodeled; while a temporary door should be put in its place. The old gentleman listened amazed, and thought it all a farce; but then the word of Jason B. Grampus had gone out, and he must keep his word. "All right," he said.

So the front door was sent down town and another one put in its place, and in that front door down town Simpson and Hastings established and firmly secured the marvelous electric lock and keyhole. Then the door was sent back and put in its place. The same day Simpson called at the office of Mr. Grampus and handed him a key, the ring of which was big enough to hold at least two fingers. Mr. Grampus grinned sardonically over this continuation of the jest.

"That's a big ring," he said.

"I am confident you'll not find it any too large," was Simpson's respectful answer.

The old man grunted. "Will it unlock the door, and how? That is all I want to know."

"It will," said Simpson; and so they parted.

That evening Mr. Grampus spent a late evening at the club, and went home in apprehension. As he neared his residence the apprehension grew. He was wobbly, and he knew it. He ascended the steps with some difficulty, and began fumbling for his latch-key. He had forgotten all about the fact that he had a new one. The remembrance came to him only when he thrust his hand into his pocket, felt the huge key, and drew it forth. That instant he felt himself leaning forward. Then something happened. He was literally "yanked" toward that sunken keyhole. His hat smashed against the door (fortunately it was a soft one), and he found himself a minute later leaning against

the entrance to his own house, grasping the handle of a latch-key which was in place and which would afford him admission without the slightest sound.

Never was a man who could walk in such condition, who, once inside a door, could not conduct himself with the utmost quietness. Grampus was no exception to the rule. He removed the key with a tug, closed the door softly and stepped into the drawing-room, where for three hours he slept, as sleeps a babe, upon the sofa. It has already been told that only three hours were required to enable Mr. Grampus to recover from three hours' indulgence at the club. He awoke refreshed and clear-headed as a man may be. He straightened out his hat, opened the front door quickly, pulled it to with a bang, as if he had just come in, and stalked upstairs in dignity. Never has a man more conscious and oppressive rectitude than one who has barely escaped a dreadful plight. No word came from the just-awakened terror in a night-dress. He had been saved—saved by Simpson.

The word of Jason B. Grampus had never been violated, and never could be. His first duty when he reached his office in the morning was to send for Simpson.

"The key worked," he said, "and you may have my daughter."

Simpson has her now and is his father-in-law's partner in business. Sometimes, looking at the

color of his wife's eyes, and the graceful but somewhat square conformation of her jaws, he wonders a little what experiences time may bring him. But she is different from her mother in many ways, and Simpson is a more adaptative and inventive man than his father-in-law ever was. He is not much worried.

CHRISTMAS 200,000 B. C.

IT was Christmas in the year 200,000 B. C. It is true that it was not called Christmas then—our ancestors at that date were not much given to the celebration of religious festivals—but, taking the Gregorian calendar and counting backward just 200,000 plus 1887 years this particular day would be located. There was no formal celebration, but, nevertheless, a good deal was going on in the neighborhood of the home of Fangs. Names were not common at the time mentioned, but the more advanced of the cave-dwellers had them. Man had so far advanced that only traces of his ape origin remained, and he had begun to have a language. It was a queer "clucking" sort of language, something like that of the Bushmen, the low type of man yet to be found in Africa, and it was not very useful in the expression of ideas, but then primitive man didn't have many ideas to express. Names, so far as used, were at this time derived merely from some personal quality or peculiarity. Fangs was so called because of his huge teeth. His mate was called She Fox; his daughter, not Nellie, nor Jennie, nor Mamie—young ladies did not affect the "ie" then—but Red Lips. She was, for the

age, remarkably pretty and refined. She could cast eyes which told a story at a suitor, and there were several kinds of snake she would not eat. She was a merry, energetic girl, and was the most useful member of the family in tree-climbing. She was an only child and rather petted. Her father or mother rarely knocked her down with a very heavy club when angry, and after her fourteenth year rarely assaulted her at all. So far as She Fox was concerned, this kindness largely resulted from discretion, the daughter having in the last encounter so belabored the mother that she was laid up for a week. The father abstained chiefly because the daughter had become useful. Red Lips was now eighteen.

Fangs was a cave-dweller. His home was sumptuously furnished. The floor of the cave was strewn with dry grass, something that in most other caves was lacking. Fangs was a prominent citizen. He was one of the strongest men in the valley. He had killed Red Beard, another prominent citizen, in a little dispute over priority of right to possession of a dead mastodon discovered in a swamp, and had for years been the terror of every cave man in the region who possessed anything worth taking.

On this particular morning, which would have been Christmas morning had it not come too early in the world's history, Fangs left the cave after eating the whole of a water-fowl he had killed with

a stone the night before and some half dozen field mice which his wife had brought in. She Fox and Red Lips had for breakfast only the bones of the duck and some roots dug in the forest. Fangs carried with him a huge club, and in a rough pouch made of the skin of some small wild animal a collection of stones of convenient size for throwing. This was before man had invented the bow or even the crude stone ax. He came back in a surly mood because he had found nothing and killed nothing, but he brought a companion with him. This companion, whom he had met in the woods, was known as Wolf, because his countenance reminded one of a wolf. He could hardly be called a gentleman, even as times and terms went then. He was evidently not of an old family, for he possessed something more than a rudimentary tail, and, had his face looked less like that of a wolf, it would have been that of a baboon. He was hairy, and his speech of rough gutturals was imperfect. He could pronounce but few words. He was, however, very strong, and Fangs rather liked him.

What Fangs did when he came in was to propose a matrimonial alliance. That is, he grasped his daughter by the arm and led her up to Wolf, and then pointing to an abandoned cave in the hillside not far distant, pushed them toward it. They did not have marriage ceremonies 200,000 B. C. Wolf, who had evidently been informed of Fangs's desire and who was himself in favor of the alliance, seized

the girl and began dragging her off to the new home and the honeymoon. She resisted, and shrieked, and clawed like a wild-cat. Her mother, She Fox, came running out, club in hand, but was promptly knocked down by Fangs, who then dragged her into the cave again. Meanwhile the bridegroom was hauling the bride away through furze and bushes at a rapid rate. Red Lips had ceased to struggle, and was thinking. Her thoughts were not very well defined nor clear, but one thing she knew well—she did not want to live in a cave with Wolf. She had a fancy that she would prefer to live instead with Yellow Hair, a young cave man who had not yet selected a mate, and who was remarkably fleet of foot. They were now very near the cave, and she knew that unless she exerted herself housekeeping would begin within a very few moments. Wolf was strong, but slow of movement. Red Lips was only less swift than Yellow Hair. An idea occurred to her. She bent her head and buried her strong teeth deep in the wrist of the man who was half-carrying, half-dragging her through the underwood.

With a howl which justified his name, Wolf for an instant released his hold. That instant allowed the girl's escape. She leaped away like a deer and darted into the forest. Yelling with pain and rage, Wolf pursued her. She gained on him steadily as she ran, but there was a light snow upon the ground, and she could be followed by the

trail which her pursuer took up doggedly and determinedly. He knew that he could tire her out and catch her in time. He solaced himself for her temporary escape by thinking, as he ran, how fiercely he would beat his bride before starting for the cave again, and as he thought his teeth showed like those of a dog of to-day.

The chase lasted for hours, and Red Lips had gained perhaps a mile upon her pursuer when her strength began to flag. The pace was telling upon her. She had run many miles. She was almost hopeless of escape when she emerged into a little glade, where sat a man gnawing contentedly at a raw rabbit. He leaped to his feet as the girl appeared, but a moment later recognized her and smiled. The man was Yellow Hair. He reached out part of the rabbit he was devouring, and Red Lips, whose breakfast had, as already mentioned, been a light one, tore at it and consumed it in a moment. Then she told of what had happened.

"We will kill Wolf, and you shall live with me," said Yellow Hair.

Red Lips assented eagerly, and the two consulted together. Near them was a hill, one side of which was a precipice. At the base of the precipice ran a path. The result of the consultation was that Yellow Hair left the girl, and making a swift circuit, came upon the precipice from the farther side, and crouched low upon its summit. The girl ran along the path at the bottom of the declivity for

some distance, then, entering a defile which crossed it at right angles, herself made a turn, climbed the hill and joined Yellow Hair. From where they were lying they could see the glade they had just left.

Wolf entered the glade, and noted where the footsteps of the girl and those of a man came together. For a moment or two he appeared troubled and suspicious; then his face cleared. He saw that the tracks had diverged again. He had recognized the man's tracks as those of Yellow Hair.

"Yellow Hair is afraid of my strong arm," he thought. "He dare not stay with Red Lips. I shall catch her soon and beat her and take her with me."

The two crouching upon the precipice watched his every movement. They had rolled to the edge of the declivity a rock as huge as they could control, and now together held it poised over the pathway. Wolf came hurrying along, his head bent down like that of a hound on the scent of game. He reached a spot just beneath the two, and then with a sudden united effort they shoved over the rock. It thundered down upon the unfortunate Wolf with an accuracy which spoke well for the eyes and hands of the lovers. The man was crushed horribly. The two above scrambled down, laughing, and Yellow Hair took from the dead Wolf a necklace of claws and fastened it proudly upon his own person.

"Now we will go to my cave," said he.

"No," said Red Lips; "my father will look for Wolf to-morrow, and will find him. Then he will come and kill us. We must go and kill him to-night."

"Yes," said Yellow Hair.

Hand in hand the two started for the cave of Fangs. The side hill in which it was situated was very steep, and the lovers thought they could duplicate the affair with Wolf. "We must cripple him, anyway," said Yellow Hair, "for I am not strong enough to fight him alone. His club is heavy."

They reached the vicinity of the cave and crept above it. Having, with great difficulty, secured a rock in position to be rolled down, they waited for Fangs to appear. He came out about dusk, and stretched out his arms lazily, when the two above released the rock. It rolled down swiftly and with great force, but there was no such sheer drop afforded as when Wolf was killed, and Fangs heard the stone coming and almost eluded it. It caught one of his legs, as he tried to leap aside, and broke it. Fangs fell to the ground.

With a yell of triumph Yellow Hair bounded to where the crippled man lay and began pounding him upon the head with his club. Fangs had a very thick head. He struggled vigorously, and succeeded in catching Yellow Hair by the wrist. Then he drew the younger man to him and began

to throttle him. The case of Yellow Hair was desperate. Fangs's great strength was too much for him. His stifled yells told of his agony.

It was at this juncture that Red Lips demonstrated her quality as a girl of decision and of action. A sharp fragment of slate, several pounds in weight, lay at her feet. She seized it and bounded forward to where the struggle was going on. The back of Fangs's head was fairly exposed. The girl brought down the sharp stone upon it just where the head and spinal column joined, and the crashing thud told of the force of the blow. Delivered with such strength upon such a spot there could be but one result. The man could not have been killed more quickly. Yellow Hair released himself from the dead giant's embrace and rose to his feet. Then, after a short breathing time, to make assurance sure, he picked up his club and battered the head of Fangs until there could be no chance of his resuscitation. The performance was unnecessary, but neither Yellow Hair nor Red Lips was aware of the fact. Their knowledge of anatomy was limited. Neither knew the effect of such a blow delivered properly at the base of the brain.

Yellow Hair finally ceased his exercise and rested on his club. "Shall we go to my cave now?" said he.

"Why should we?" said Red Lips. "Let us take this cave. There is dry grass on the floor."

They entered the cave. She Fox, who had witnessed what had occurred, sat in one corner, and looked up doubtfully as they entered. "I am tired," said Yellow Hair, and he laid himself down and went to sleep.

She Fox looked at her daughter. "I killed three hedgehogs to-day," she whispered.

The new mistress of the cave looked at her kindly. "Go out and dig some roots," she said, "and come back with them, and then with them and the hedgehogs we will have a feast."

She Fox went out and returned in an hour with roots and nuts. Red Lips awakened Yellow Hair, and all three fed ravenously and merrily. It was a great occasion in the cave of the late Fangs. There was no such Christmas feast, at the same time a wedding feast, in any other cave in all the region. And the sequel to the events of the day was as happy as the day itself. Yellow Hair and Red Lips somehow avoided being killed, and grew old together, and left a numerous progeny.

THE CHILD

THERE was a man who was called upon to write a Christmas article for a great newspaper. He had been a newspaper man himself at one time and it occurred to him, in all reverence, that if some modern daily publication could, nearly 1900 years ago, have reported faithfully all it could learn regarding the Birth in Bethlehem, there might now be fewer doubters in the world. He imagined what a conscientious representative of the Daily Augustinian, had such newspaper existed in Jerusalem, might have written concerning what was the greatest happening in the story of all mankind since the days of Moses and the Shepherd Kings.

Rarely has man worked harder than did this person, who, for a month or so—he had studied it all years before—sought the certain details of the historical story of the Christ. He re-read his Josephus; he sought new sources of information, and called to his aid men who knew most along the lines of the outstanding spokes of the main question. Then he lost himself as a reporter of the Daily Augustinian, and this—headlines and all—is what he wrote:

THE BIRTH OF THE CHILD

IS THEIR MESSIAH COME?

OLD JEWISH PROPHECY DECLARED FULFILLED IN THE BIRTH OF A GREAT PRINCE.

THE STRANGENESS OF THE STORY.

A CHILD BORN IN A STABLE IN BETHLEHEM ASSERTED TO BE THE CHRIST.

THE ACCOUNT.

A strange story comes to the Daily Augustinian from the suburb of Bethlehem, the result of which has been to create deep feeling among the Jewish residents. It is asserted that the Messiah prophesied in their books of worship has come, and that there will be a revolution in the religious world. This belief seems to be spreading among the poor, but is not concurred in by the more wealthy nor by the rabbis who officiate in the temple, though one of them, named Zacharias, is a believer. Upon the first knowledge gained of this reported marvel every effort was made by the Augustinian to learn all possible concerning it. The account was that the Messiah had come in the form of a babe, born in the stable of an inn at Bethlehem, and a trustworthy member of the Augustinian's staff was sent to the place at once. Here is his account:

It was learned before Bethlehem was reached by the reporter that the story of the Child had first been circulated by those in charge of the flocks kept for sacrifice in the Jewish temple. These are shepherds of an intelligent class who associate with

the priests, and whose pastures are very near the city on the Bethlehem road. It was thought best to interview these men before seeking the Child. They were found without difficulty, and told their story simply, a story so remarkable that it is impossible to determine what comment should be made upon it.

The head shepherd, an intelligent and evidently thoroughly honest man of about forty years of age, spoke for all present. "We were watching our flocks as usual on the night concerning the occurrences of which you ask," he said, "when all at once the sky became full of a great light. It was wonderful. We looked up, and there in the midst of the light appeared a form which I cannot describe, it was so bright and dazzling. It spoke to us; spoke in a voice like nothing that can be conceived of for its sweetness, saying that the Savior we have so long awaited had been born to us, and that we might know Him because we should find Him in Bethlehem wrapped in His swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. The wonderful figure had but ceased speaking when the whole world above seemed filled with similar forms, and there came from the heavens such music, such sounds of praising, as I cannot convey an idea of to you more than I can of the figure. We were awe-stricken at first, and then with one accord we started for Bethlehem. Then another strange thing happened. A great light seemed to float above and

ahead of us until we reached Bethlehem, when it hung suspended over the inn. And there we found the Child."

"Is the Child the Messiah of your race? Do you believe it?"

"I *know!*" was the answer. "It is the Messiah!" And that all the shepherds believe was apparent. They appear intelligent and honest and straightforward of speech. It is incomprehensible. The next step was to visit Bethlehem.

There is but one inn in Bethlehem; there was but one place in which to seek the Child. Thither went the seeker after facts. The inn is a plain structure of the usual stone-work of the hillside towns, and the stable, extending backward from the house proper, is largely an excavation in the rock. There is a narrow entrance at the side as well as one through the house. About the gates of the inn stood a number of people, the look upon their faces indicating that they were aware of the great news to their race, but all silent in their joy or disbelief or whatever sentiment affected them. The visitor was shown through the inn into the stable. There were the man, the woman, and the Child. They chanced to be alone at the time.

Of the Child it may be said that it is a beautiful male infant, nothing more, to the ordinary eye, and conducting itself not differently from any babe of its age. It clings to its mother's bosom, knowing nothing of the world, and as yet, caring nothing.

The man is a sober-faced Jew, apparently about thirty years of age. The woman would attract attention anywhere, for she is one of the fair women of Nazareth, and even among those so noted for their beauty she must have ranked foremost, so sweet of face is she. She is seemingly not yet twenty years of age, with the dark hair, Oriental features, and wonderful eyes of the women of her class and town, but with an added expression which makes one think of the angels of which the Jewish writers tell. That she herself believes she is the mother of the Messiah, that the Child she has borne is the Christ, does not admit of doubt. Even as she clasped Him to her breast there was awe mingled with the affection in her look, a devotion beyond even that of motherhood. The man, it was apparent, shared with her in the faith. He was asked to tell the story of the miraculous birth, and stepping aside a little from the woman and the Child, he talked gravely and earnestly, answering all questions, since, as he said, it was his duty to tell the great thing to all the world, to Jew and pagan alike.

He was betrothed to the young woman Mary, he said, months ago, in the town of Nazareth, in Galilee, where he is a carpenter. They were to have been wedded, but during the interval between the betrothal and the marriage there came to her a figure, which was that of an angel of the Lord, saying to her that a son would be born to her the

paternity of which would be supernatural, and that this son would be the Messiah told of in Jewish prophecy. She informed her betrothed of this, and that she had evidence that what had been told her would occur. At first Joseph was greatly troubled and resolved that the marriage should not take place lest a great disgrace should come upon him. He loved the young woman, and did not want to harm her in the eyes of the world, yet there seemed no alternative but to refuse a consummation of the betrothal. It was at this time that there came to him, as there had come to her, an angelic visitation, in which was confirmed what she had told him, and in which he was commanded to marry her. He was told this in a dream, and believed, and did as he was commanded, though as yet he has been the husband of Mary but in name.

After their marriage came the recent order from Rome for the census of all the Jews, and as it was accompanied by the direction that all should be enumerated, not where they might be living, but where they were registered at birth, Joseph, who was originally from Bethlehem, was compelled to make the journey. He was accompanied by his young wife, who rode upon a donkey, her husband walking all the way from Nazareth beside her. Upon their arrival in Bethlehem they found the place so full of those called in by the census that there was no place for them to lodge. The owner of the inn, though, who knew of Joseph's family,

did all he could to relieve them, and they were so given lodging in the stable. There to the patient Mary came a woman's great trial, and the Child was born. Then came the shepherds, with their wonderful tale of what they had seen, followed, as related, by their adoration.

It was learned by inquiry in Bethlehem that Joseph, the carpenter, though a poor man, is a direct descendant of David, the famous Jewish king, and, strangely enough, too, that the beautiful Mary belongs to the same princely family. The Hebrew records of this great race are most complete, and there is no doubt as to the blood of the man and woman. Mary, so it is said, is the daughter of a gentlewoman named Anna and of a Hebrew who was held in great respect. There is another most singular fact to be related in this connection. It will be remembered that some months ago, when it came the turn of the venerable priest Zacharias to offer the sacrifice in the Jewish temple—a privilege which comes to a priest but once in his lifetime—he returned before the people from the inner sanctuary stricken dumb, and manifesting by signs that he had seen a vision, the event creating great excitement among the members of his faith. Later he made it known that in the sanctuary he had a vision of an angel, who declared to him that his wife, who was childless, should have a son in her old age who should be a great prophet and preacher, proclaiming the Messiah. Since that time, the aged

couple, who live south of Jerusalem, have indeed been blessed with a child, the father's dumbness disappearing with its birth and the priest again praising the Lord of his people. To this child has been given the name of John.

What is most remarkable and unexplainable of all is something confirmed by Joseph and Mary, as well as by Zacharias and his wife. The wife of Zacharias, who is named Elizabeth, is a cousin of Mary, and some impulse moved the latter, after she had explained her condition to Joseph, to visit her aged kinswoman. She did so, and no sooner had she reached the home of Zacharias and entered the door than Elizabeth, who had not known of her coming, broke forth into praise of Mary as to be the mother of her Lord. The unborn babe, it is declared, recognized the presence of the Messiah, and so Elizabeth was led to adore and prophesy.

Many Nazarenes who are now in Jerusalem were seen, and all confirmed the story, so far as they could know of the relations of Joseph and Mary, while many people of the hill town where Zacharias and Elizabeth live confirm all that is related of the extraordinary occurrence in their household, of the husband's recovery from dumbness when his child was born, and of his apparent inspiration at the time. There is a strong feeling among the Jews, and the belief in the real appearance of the Messiah is spreading, though, as intimated, the priests of the temple, with the exception already alluded to,

seem disposed to discredit the revelation. They declare that the Messiah would scarcely come in such humble way; that the Prince of the House of David who shall renew the glory of their race will come in great magnificence and that all will recognize Him at once.

What has been related is what was learned some days ago from the interviews given and from inquiries in all quarters where it seemed likely that they would throw any light on what has really occurred. Since then something as inexplicable has happened as anything heretofore reported, something from many points of view more startling and unexplainable. There came into Jerusalem recently three Persians of the sort called magi, or wise men, the students of the great race who have been to an extent friendly with the Jews since the time when Babylon was at its greatest. These three men, who had made a journey which must have occupied them nearly two years, seemed hurriedly intent on some great mission, and presented themselves at once before the Tetrarch, Herod, asking for information. They wanted to know where the Child was to be found who was born King of the Jews, seeming to think that the Tetrarch must know and would direct them willingly. They said they had seen the Child's star in the far east and had come to do Him homage. This was astonishing information to the Tetrarch. As is well known, there are many political intrigues in progress now,

and Herod has adopted a severe policy. As between the Romans and the Jews he has been considerate in the endeavor to preserve pleasant relations with both parties, but he is most alert. His reply to the magi was that he did not know where the Child was, but he hoped they would succeed in their mission. He requested, furthermore, that when they had found the King they should inform him, that he also might visit Him. The magi departed, and shrewd officers were at once sent to follow them, but, as subsequently appeared, with slight success. The magi eluded the officers and found the Child. Joseph and Mary had moved from the stable into a house in Bethlehem, and there the three Persians bowed down before the Babe and, after the style of adoration in their country, presented gifts — gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

These last related facts were learned, as were those first given, in Bethlehem. The next step in the inquiry was naturally to seek an interview with the magi, the three travelers from Persia who so oddly showed their belief in the supernatural nature of what has occurred, but they were found with difficulty. After visiting the Infant they had returned at once to town, and it proved a hard task to discover their whereabouts. It was ascertained, after much inquiry, that three Persians of the better class had been stopping at a small hotel near the southern gate, and a visit to the place revealed

the fact that they were still there, though about to leave. They had, after their visit to Bethlehem, remained close indoors, and, the keeper of the hotel said, seemed apprehensive of a visit from the authorities. The reporter was presented to three fine-looking Chaldeans, evidently men of some importance at home, who received him with reserve, but who, after learning his occupation and object, became a little more communicative. The eldest of the three, a man past middle-age, with full beard and remarkably keen eyes, acted as spokesman for all. He was asked what he thought of the Child at Bethlehem.

"It is the Messiah of the Jews," was his prompt reply.

"How do you know that?"

"We know it by His star—the star that was prophesied as heralding His coming. That the Jewish Messiah was to come was foretold by their own prophets and by our own Zoroaster. We are astronomers, and know the mystery of the heavens and the nativities. In what is called Mount Victory in our country is a cave, from the mouth of which the heavens are studied by wise men. About two years ago appeared the star of the Messiah. Then we began our journey to the city of the Jews to pay homage to the Great Ruler born."

"But why do you, who are not Jews, come on such an expedition?"

"Our belief is broad. We care very little for

any old teachings which are not verified by celestial phenomena. We saw the prophecy fulfilled. That was enough."

"What about the star? Is it something which will not last?"

"No. It is a star which will last as long as any, but one which is visible on earth only at intervals of long ages. Then it foretells a great event. It appeared last just before the birth of Moses."

"What is it like?"

"It is a bright, almost red, star, visible in the sign Pisces of the zodiac only when Jupiter and Saturn are in conjunction. It is the star of the Messiah."

His companions assented to all the elder man said, but he declined to talk further on the subject. The name of the speaker was given as Melchoir; the names of his two friends were Caspar and Balthasar. The first was the one who made a gift of gold for the child, while the second contributed frankincense, and the third myrrh. The reporter returned to the hotel later in the day to ask certain additional questions, but the visitors had left hurriedly. The landlord said they had gone none too soon, as agents of the authorities visited the place soon after their disappearance. It is said that they were warned in a dream that they must escape. They were all three well mounted, and are now, no doubt, some distance from Jerusalem.

Such are the facts. Such is the story as learned

of the Messiah of the Jews. Were their prophets right? Has the great Prince come? Is the glory of Rome to pass away before the glory of the Hebrew Christ?

Will the Tetrarch remain undisturbed?

THE BABY AND THE BEAR

THIS is a true story of the woods:

It was afternoon on the day before a holiday, and a boy of nine and a fat-legged baby of three years were frolicking in front of a rough log house beside a stream in a forest of northern Michigan. The house was miles from the nearest settlement, yet the boy and baby were the only ones about the place. The explanation of this circumstance was simple.

It was proposed to build a sawmill in the forest, and ship the lumber downstream to the great lake. The river was deep enough to allow the passage up to the sawmill site of a small barge, and a preliminary of the work was to build a rude dock. A pile-driver was towed up the river, but as this particular pile-driver had not the usual stationary steam-engine accompanying it, the great iron weight which was dropped upon the piles to drive them into the river bed was elevated by means of a windlass and mule power. The weight, once lifted, was released by means of a trigger connected by a cord with a post, where a man driving the mule around could pull it. The arrangement was primitive but effective.

A Mr. Hart, the man in charge of the four or five workmen engaged, lived with his wife and two children, Johnny and the baby, in the log house referred to. The men had leave of absence, and had left early in the morning to spend the day in the settlement, about ten miles off. Later in the day Mr. Hart and his wife had driven there also to obtain certain things for making the holiday dinner a little out of the common, and to secure certain small gifts for Johnny and the baby. So it came that Johnny, a sturdy and pretty reliable youth of his years, was left in charge of things, with strict injunctions to take good care of the baby. A luncheon neatly arranged in a basket was likewise left to be consumed whenever he and his more youthful charge should become hungry. The pair had been having a good time all by themselves on the day referred to. Breakfast had been eaten very late that morning, but Johnny was a boy and growing. It was about one o'clock when he proposed to the baby that they eat dinner. That corpulent young gentleman assented with great promptness. Johnny went into the house and got the lunch. The broad platform of the pile-driver, tied firmly beside the river's bank, attracted Johnny's attention as he emerged, and he conceived the idea that there would be a good place for enjoyment of the feast. He helped the baby to get on board. The great mass of iron used in the work chanced to be raised to the top of the framework,

and in the space underneath, between the timbers was a cozy niche in which to sit and eat. The boy and baby sat down there and proceeded to business.

It occurred to the boy that he had done a tolerably good thing. He didn't analyze the situation particularly, but he had an idea that eating on the barge was fun. The platform rocked gently, the air was crisp and keen, a smell of the pine woods came over the river, and Johnny felt pretty well. He thought this having charge of things all by himself was by no means bad.

"Whoosh!"

Born in the backwoods though he had been, Johnny did not at first recognize that sound—half grunt, half snort, and full of a terrible meaning. He sprang to his feet and looked up the bank. There, gazing down upon the pair on the platform, was a big black bear!

The beast looked fierce and hungry. The weather had been cold, and bears which had not gone into winter quarters were all savage. A yearling steer had been killed by one in the woods a few days before. The attention of the brute upon the bank seemed fixed upon the baby. There was something in its fierce eyes indicating that it had found just what it needed. If there was anything that would make a meal just to its taste that day it was baby—fat baby, about two years old. It gave another "whoosh!" and came lumbering down the bank.

For a moment Johnny stood panic-stricken; then instinctively he clutched the baby—that individual kicking and protesting wildly at being dragged away from luncheon—and stumbled toward the other end of the barge. As Johnny and the baby reached one end, the bear came down upon the other, and shuffled rapidly toward them. There was slight hope for the fleeing couple, at least for the baby. That personage seemed destined for a bear's dinner that day. Suddenly the bear hesitated. He had reached the remains of the dinner.

Part of what Johnny's mother had provided for the midday repast was bread and butter, plentifully besmeared with honey. If a bear, big or little, has one weakness in this world it is just honey. He will do for honey what a miser will do for gain, what a politician will do for office, what a lover will do for his sweetheart, what some women will do for dress. For that bear to pass that bread and honey was simply an impossibility. He would stop and devour it. It would take but a moment or two, and the baby could come afterward.

The boy gave a frightened glance behind him as he jumped off the platform and scrambled up the bank with the baby in his arms. He saw that the bear had paused, and a gleam of hope came to him. He put the baby down on its feet and started to run with it. But the baby was heavy; its legs besides being, as already remarked, very fat, were very short, and progress was not rapid. The bear,

the boy knew, would not be occupied with the luncheon long. He reached the windlass where the mule had worked, and leaned pantingly against the post holding the cord by pulling which the weight was released from the top of the timbers on the barge. A wild idea of trying to climb the post with the baby came into his head. He looked up and noticed the cord.

Like a flash came to the terrified boy a great thought. If he dared only stop a moment! If he dared try to pull the cord as he had seen his father do and release the trigger which sustained the great weight! There was the bear right under it!

Even as this thought came to Johnny the bear looked up and growled. Johnny grabbed at the baby and started to run again, but the baby stumbled and rolled over into a little hollow with its fat legs sticking upward. In desperation Johnny jumped back and caught at the cord. He pulled with all his might, but the trigger at the top of the pile-driver sustained a great burden and the thing required more than Johnny's strength. "Come, baby, quick!" he cried. "Put your arm about me and lean back!" The young gentleman addressed had regained his feet again and was placid. He waddled up, put his arm about Johnny, and leaned back sturdily. The bear looked up again and growled, this time more earnestly. The luncheon was about finished. Johnny set his teeth and pulled again. The baby added, say, thirty pounds

to the pull. It was just what was needed. There was a creak at the top of the pile-driver, and then—

"W-h-i-r-r! T-h-u-d!"

Six hundred pounds of iron dropped from a height of twenty-five feet on the small of the back of an elephant would finish him. It is more than enough for a bear. Over the river and through the forest went out one awful roar of brute agony, then all was still. A bear with its backbone broken and crushed down into its stomach is just as dead as a chipmunk would be under the same circumstances. For a moment the silence prevailed, to be followed by the yell of a healthy youngster in great distress. As the trigger yielded, Johnny and the baby had keeled heels over head backward into the soft moss, and Johnny had fallen on the baby.

The boy arose a little dazed, lifted the howling infant to its feet, and then looked toward the boat. The bear was there—crushed beneath the iron. From one side of the mass projected the animal's hind-quarters, from the other its front, and there were the glaring eyes and savage open jaws. It was enough. Johnny grabbed the baby and started for the house.

Johnny was perfectly convinced that the bear was dead, very dead, but he didn't propose to take any chances. He liked adventure, but he was satisfied with the quantity for one afternoon. He was young, but he knew when he had enough. He dragged the baby inside, bolted the door, and

waited. At about six o'clock in the evening his father and mother returned. Johnny didn't have much to say when he opened the door and came out with the baby to meet them, but for a man of his size his chest protruded somewhat phenomenally. He told his story. His mother caught up the fat baby and kissed it. His father took him by the hand, and they went down and looked at the bear. Tears came in the man's eyes as he laid his hand on Johnny's head.

Along in January or February it was worth one's while to be up in Michigan where they were building a sawmill. It was worth one's while to note the appearance of a young man, nine years of age or thereabouts, who would saunter out of the log house along in the afternoon, advance toward the river, and then, with his legs spread wide apart, his hands in his pockets, and his hat stuck on the back of his head, stand on a small knoll and look down upon the spot where *he* killed a bear the day before Christmas. It was worth one's while to note the expression upon his countenance as he stood there and as he finally stalked away, whistling Yankee Doodle, with perhaps, a slight lack of precision, but with tremendous spirit and significance.

AT THE GREEN TREE CLUB

TOM OLDFIELD sat comfortably over his newspaper in his big chair at the Green Tree Club. He gave a good-natured swing of his shoulders, but heaved a sigh when he was told that two ladies desired to see him immediately on important business. The well-trained club servant, a colored man, gave the message with a knowing look, subdued by respectful sympathy.

Now, Tom Oldfield was well known for his gallantry, and no one had ever accused him of being disturbed over a call from ladies, under any circumstances, but all had not yet learned what was the sad, sincere truth, that Mr. Oldfield decidedly objected to any interruption when he was smoking his after-breakfast cigar and glancing over the news of the day. While engaged in this business Mr. Oldfield insisted upon a measure of quiet and self-concentration. When it was over he was ready to meet the rest of the world—and not before.

And so he sighed and made his moan to himself as he took his eyes from the column of The Daily Warwhoop, and bade Joseph show the ladies to the club library, his pet loafing place, not only despite of, but because of the fact that it was open

to visitors and much frequented by club members at all hours. Tom Oldfield was a genial and companionable soul.

His welcoming smile faded as his kindly eyes took in the advancing group. Led by Joseph in a most deferential, not to say deprecating, manner, the two ladies slowly crossed the big room, and came around the great table to the chair set for them near Mr. Oldfield's accepted harbor in the club rooms.

One of the visitors was a middle-aged woman of much elegance of figure, and with a face the outlines of which were beautiful, while its expression of discontent, accentuated by lines of worry, made its owner distinctly unattractive. She was clothed in all the glory of richly exaggerated plainness and in the latest fashion for morning walking dress. Her daughter, simply the beautiful mother over again without the disagreeable expression, though her young face was clouded by grief and concern, was the other caller. Joseph announced the names of the fair interlopers, and Oldfield groaned inwardly as he heard them.

"Mrs. and Miss Chester, Mr. Oldfield," said Joseph, with a low and sweeping Ethiopian bow, and after the ladies were seated he withdrew, not before casting upon Oldfield, however, a significant glance.

Oldfield was slow to seat himself again, after his greeting to his guests. Manifestly, he thought,

his easy chair would not do for him during the coming interview. He selected a high-backed cane-seat chair from those around the writing table, and as he had already twice said, "Good morning, Mrs. Chester," and "I am very glad to meet you"—the last being a wicked perversion of his real emotions—he waited for the party of the second part to open the business of the meeting.

"We have come to you—and hope you will pardon us for troubling you, Mr. Oldfield—"

The club man saw that Mrs. Chester was not going to cry, and took courage.

"We need your help," the lady continued, "and we are sure you will give it to us."

"I shall be very glad if I can in any way assist or oblige you, Mrs. Chester," Oldfield assured the elder lady, while he looked determinedly away from the younger one, who, he was positive, was getting ready to cry. "What do you want me to do? Ned isn't in any trouble is he?" This was going straight to the point, as Mr. Oldfield knew full well.

Of course, Ned Chester was at the bottom of this spectacular disturbance of his morning. It might as well be out and over the sooner.

"Oh! Mr. Oldfield," cried the daughter, "have you seen papa?"

She was bound to cry, if she hadn't already begun. Oldfield was sure of it.

"Catherine!" expostulated the girl's mother, and Oldfield noticed the sharp acrimony of voice

and gesture. "Mr. Oldfield," she softened as she addressed him, but there was a hardness about her every feature and expression, "my husband has not been seen nor heard from since last Sunday, when he left home, and I am almost distracted."

"And we have waited until we can bear it no longer. This is Friday—it is almost a week," broke in the girl, ignoring her mother's protesting wave of the hand and angry glance.

"Oh, he's all right," asserted Oldfield. "Don't worry. We will find him at once; I'm sure some one in the club will know all about him. You have, of course, inquired at his office?"

"Yes, and no one there knows anything about him. His letters lie unopened on his desk; he has not been there since Saturday."

There was no occasion for all this fencing. The heaven's truth, known to all three, was that Ned Chester was away on a symmetrical and gigantic spree, according to his custom once or twice a year.

Oldfield, looking straight at Mrs. Chester's slightly bent brow, said, quietly, "I have known Ned Chester for twenty years; it is no new thing for him to be away for a day or a night occasionally, is it?"

"No," replied the poor wife; "but he has never stayed so long before, and I know something has happened—he has been hurt, may be killed. We must find him!"

"You say he left home Sunday?"

"Yes, Sunday evening. He left in a fit of anger over some little thing, and now—"

She was dangerously near breaking down, and Oldfield could plainly hear smothered sobs beside him on the side of his chair toward which he chose not to look.

"I will inquire," he said, hopefully, "and I know I can find him almost immediately. Nothing has happened to hurt him. Sit here a moment and wait for me."

Just outside the door Oldfield met Joseph. "Well, where is he?" he asked.

"Mr. Oldfield, I tell you Mr. Chester has on a most awful jag, and he fell and almost split open his skull Tuesday morning, and I've had him over at the Barrett House ever since. The doctor has patched him up, but he ain't fit to be seen, not by ladies."

"Pretty nervous, is he?"

"Nervous! Why, he's just missed snakes this time, that's all!"

"Oh, nonsense! He's not so bad as that; but I must go and see him. When did you see him last?"

"Stayed all night with him, sir, and left him quite easy this morning. Don't let the ladies see him, Mr. Oldfield; it would break him up."

"Break him up! What do you think about their own feelings?"

"Well, you see, he is dreading to go home, and

to see her walk right in on him would break him all up. It would so! He would have 'em sure then."

"Joseph, you've got sense. Take this for any little thing you may need," said Oldfield, as he put a green colored piece of paper in Joseph's hand, and turned back into the library where the waiting women sat.

"Your father is safe, Miss Chester," he said, softly to the pale, anxious daughter, who ran to meet him; "you shall see him soon. I will tell your mother all about it."

Miss Chester, expressing great relief, and, giving Oldfield her hand, sat obediently down to the illustrated books and magazines he handed her. She was quite out of earshot of the place where her mother sat impatiently waiting for news.

"Your husband is all right, Mrs. Chester. He has met with a slight accident, but is under a doctor's care at the Barrett House. I will go to see him. Without doubt he will be able to go home in a day or two."

The wife nearly lost self-control, but as Oldfield talked on, reassuring her of her husband's safety, she gradually became calm, and then the look of settled hardness came back into her face.

"What shall I do?" she burst out. "How can I go on in such shame and agony year after year? You're an old friend of Ned's, Mr. Oldfield—excuse me—perhaps you can advise me."

"I want to," answered Oldfield, promptly. "But will you hear me without becoming angry?"

"Certainly! I will be thankful for your advice, Mr. Oldfield."

The man had a certain hardness in his own look now.

"Let us sit down by this window. There, you look comfortable. Now, let's see—oh, yes, I remember where I wanted to begin. Ned is one of those fellows who find Sunday a bad day—and holidays. I've heard him say often how he hated holidays; and it's then, or on a Sunday, that he goes off on these drinking bouts, isn't it?"

"Yes," gasped the astonished woman. This cool, practical way of looking at the trial of her life was strange to her; she found it hard to adjust herself to the situation.

"He's a hard-working man, is Ned, a regular toiler and moiler. When he is at work he is all right, or when he is at play, so far as that goes. He is never so happy and so entirely himself as when he is among congenial friends, unless it is when over a good book, or off hunting or fishing. These crazy drinking spells come on at Christmas or Thanksgiving time, or on some Sunday, when he is at home with his family."

Mrs. Chester's face had flushed painfully. Not seeming to notice her agitation, Oldfield continued: "You remarked, did you not, that Ned left home in anger Sunday evening. Pardon me, since I have

said so much already, was there some argument or contention in the house—between you and Ned, for instance?"

"It was a little quarrel, nothing serious," faltered Mrs. Chester.

"I don't want to hear about it," said Oldfield, hurriedly, himself much embarrassed, and inwardly fuming over himself as a colossal idiot for entering upon such a conversation. "I only want you to think for a minute about the last hour or two Sunday evening before Ned left home. No doubt he was to blame for whatever that was unpleasant, not a doubt; but since you ask me for advice, can't you think of some way to make Sundays and holidays endurable to Ned, bless his big heart! Be a little easy on him, a little careless about his ways. Ned is such a simple fellow! Hard words, irony and sarcasm, complainings and scoldings cut him very deeply! Don't be offended, but don't you think that perhaps you could manage it to somehow keep Ned from flinging out of the house desperate and foolish every once in a while, on some Sunday or holiday? I'll tell you! Begin early—begin sometimes before he is awake—to get things ready, and keep them going so that Ned won't start out, a reckless, emotional maniac before nightfall!"

Oldfield paused, struck by his own earnestness and plain speaking, and somewhat scared.

Mrs. Chester arose, and Oldfield's heart ached for her. "Madame," he said, "any man who

leaves wife and child to worry over him for days while he carouses is to an extent a brute. There is no comprehensive excuse for him. But when one is living with, and intends to go on living with a man who at times becomes such a brute, it is as well to know and acknowledge his weak points, and forbear to press him too far, even in the best cause, even when you are perfectly right, as I am sure you always are, for example. But let us come back to our original topic of conversation. I am afraid you cannot see Ned to-day. I will call upon him, and then telephone you his exact condition, telling you if he needs anything. And to-morrow, after the doctor has made his morning visit, I will send you another message. Ned will be all right and at home in a day or two.

"In the mean time you might think over what I have said to you, and make up your mind whether I am right or not. About what, you ask, Miss Chester? Oh! only some nonsense I have been talking to your mother, a sort of theory of mine with which she has no patience, I can see. Good-by, ladies—no, don't waste time thanking me; I am glad if I have been of any use. Good-by."

He bowed them into the elevator, and slowly drifted back into the club library. "Of all fools I am the prize fool!" he murmured to himself. And he called Joseph, and with him set forth to the Barrett House to see Ned Chester.

THE RAIN-MAKER

JOHN GRAY, civil engineer, good looking and aged twenty-eight, was engaged in the service of the United States of America. He had, upon emerging from college, been fortunate enough to secure a place among the new graduates who are utilized in making what is called the "lake survey," that is, the work upon the great inland seas we designate as lakes, and had finally from that drifted into work for the Agricultural Department—a department which, though latest established, is bound, with its force for good upon this great producing continent, to rank eventually with any place in the cabinet of the President. In the Agricultural Department John Gray, being clever and a hard worker, had risen rapidly, and had finally been appointed assistant to the ranking official whose duty it was to visit certain arid regions of Arizona and there seek by scientific methods to produce a sudden rainfall over parched areas, and so make the desert blossom as the rose.

Mr. John Gray went with the expedition, and distinguished himself from the beginning. He could endure hard work; he was a good civil engineer and comprehended the theory upon which his superiors were working, and above all, he was

an enthusiast in the thing they were undertaking, and had independent devices of his own, to be submitted at the proper time, for the attainment of certain mechanical ends which had puzzled the pundits at Washington. He had ideas as to how should be flown the new form of kite which should carry into the upper depths explosives to shatter and compress the atmosphere and produce the condensation which makes rain, just as concussions from below—as after the cannonading of a great battle—produce the same effect. He had fancies about a lot of things connected with the work of the rain-making expedition, and his fancies were practicalities. He proved invaluable to his superiors in office when came the experiments the reports of which at first declared that rain-making was a success, and later admitted something to the contrary.

There had been, as all the world knows, certain experiments of the government rain-makers followed by rains, and certain experiments after which the earth had remained as parched and the sky as brazen as before. The one successful experiment had, as it chanced, been conducted under Mr. Gray's personal and ardent supervision. He had overseen the flying of the kites, the impudent invasion of the upper depths when a button was touched, and then he had seen the white cumulus clouds gather and become nimbus, followed by a brief rainfall upon a hot and yellow land. He had

felt as Moses may have felt when he smote the rock, as De Lesseps may have felt when he brought the seas together. He thought one of the man-helping problems of the ages almost solved.

So far John Gray, civil engineer in the service of the Government, had been lost in his avocation. He saw no flower beside his path; he dreamed of no woman he had known. But there came a change, for which he was not responsible. There was delay in the shipping of additional supplies needed for the expedition's work—as there usually is delay and bad management in whatever is intrusted to certain encrusted bureaus in Washington—and in the interval, with nothing to do, this civil engineer spent necessarily most of his time in the little town about the railroad station, and there fell in love. It was an odd location for such luxury or risk as the one defined; but the thing happened. John Gray fell in love, and fell far.

Arizona is said, by its present inhabitants, to have a climate which makes the faces of women wonderfully fair, given a face whose features are not distorted to start with. This assertion may be attributed rather to territorial pride than to conviction; but it doesn't matter. There was assuredly one pretty girl in Cougarville, and Gray had begun to feel a more than passing interest in her. He had even gone so far in his meditations as to conceive the idea of taking her East with him when he went back (he had laid up a little money), and

though he had not yet suggested this to the young lady, he felt reasonably confident. She had been with him much and seemed very fond of him. Once he had kissed her at the door. Certainly he was fond of her.

The little town upon the railroad was not new, and Miss Fleming belonged to one of the old families of the place—that is, her father had come there at least twenty-five years ago. He had mined and dealt in timber and taken tie contracts, and was now considered as fairly ranking among the twenty-five or thirty "warm" men of the place. There were castes in Cougarville, and the society made up of these families was exclusive. Their parties in town were as select as their picnics in the foothills, and the foothill picnics were the occasions where Cougarville society really came out. It was a foothill picnic which brought an end to all relations between John Gray and Miss Molly Fleming. It came about in this way.

There had been a party in Cougarville, and Gray, finally abandoning himself to all the risk of falling in love and marrying this flower of the frontier, had committed himself deeply. He had declared himself. The girl was reserved, but beaming. He had to leave his apparently more than half-acquiescent inamorata to whom he was an escort. At 11 P. M. he left her temporarily in charge of one Muggles, the curled darling and easily most imposing clerk among all those employed in the

big "emporium" of the frontier town. He felt safe. Such a character as Molly Fleming could never be attracted by such a person as that scented floor-walker, even if he did chance to have a small interest in the concern and reasonably good prospects. He left them with equanimity; he saw them together an hour later with just a shade of apprehension. They seemed to understand each other too well, and their eyes, as they looked each into the other's face, seemed a trifle too soulful and trusting. He asked Miss Fleming on the way home if she would go with him to the picnic to be held in the wooded foothills on the following day. She laughed in his face, and said she was going with Mr. Muggles. He saw it all. Civil engineering and devotion had been cast over for a general store interest, home relatives, Muggles, and devotion. He was jilted.

The reflections of John Gray that night, described by colors, may be referred to as simply green and red—green for jealousy, red for vengeance. He slept and had nightmares, and waked and made plans. It was an awful night for him. But as morning came and his head cleared, the instinct of jealousy lessened and that of vengeance increased. He arose in the morning a more or less dangerous human being.

The picnic had no attraction for John Gray. He attended to business about the headquarters of the expedition, and when noon came sat aside and

brooded. He thought to himself, "They are up there together, and she has discarded me for this storekeeper, who knows nothing save how to make close little trades and make and save money." Then a new and broader range of thought came to him: "She is but following the instinct of her family. Blood will tell. Both her father and mother are below the grade which means the average of my own kind. She will in time show her blood, whoever may marry her. That is the law of nature." This encouraged him.

As his reasoning process became more smooth and true, he realized what an escape he had had, and then, as he reviewed the story of the past months, his desire for "evening up" things grew. It was low and mean, he knew, but that made no difference. He must get even.

He thought over the situation. There they were, the élite of Cougarville, up in a canyon of the foothills, beside a creek, where were trees and turf and picturesque rocks, and were having a good time. Muggles and Molly had no doubt withdrawn from the mass of picnickers, and were billing and cooing together. His veins burned at the thought. Oh, for some means of settling them! Then came an inspiration to him!

Gray's superior was away, but there had come to hand at last all the material necessary for a renewed experiment. He had the kites, the explosives, and the assistants. He had authority to act

should his superior not return on time. His superior was not on time. Was it not more than his inclination but really his duty to try to make rain at once, and in the particular locality just suited in his judgment for securing an effect? As to the locality, there was no doubt. It was up the foothills a mile or two above, and just beside the valley in which were the picnickers. The men about the post were summoned, burros were loaded, and at 2 P.M. the whole rain-making force was far up the foothills unloading and preparing to fly gigantic kites and explode in the upper vaults of the atmosphere bombs and rockets and all sorts of things to make a rainstorm.

All went well. The wind was right, and the huge kites, bomb-laden, climbed into the sky like vultures. The electric wires were in order, and when at last the buttons were touched and the explosion came, it seemed as if the very vaults of heaven were riven. It was a great success. Gray, elated and hopeful, but not fully assured, stood and watched and waited.

He did not have to wait long. Not far to the north in the hard blue sky suddenly appeared a little dab of woolly white. Another showed in the east. They showed all about, and grew and grew in size until they became great, over-toppling, blending mountains, a new and mysterious world against the sky. Then came a darkening of the mass. The cumulus was changing to the nimbus.

Then came a distant rumble, and, preceding another, a great blaze of lightning went across the zenith. To those in the region the world darkened. A mountain thunderstorm was on.

The darkness increased; the clouds hung lower and lower, the lightning flashed more frequently and fiercely, and finally the flood-gates of the clouds were opened and the rain fell with such denseness that the mass of drops made literal sheets. The little brooks were filled, and tumbled into the creek which ran down the canyon where were the picnickers. Bred in the region, the picnickers knew what such a flood meant, and with the first sound of thunder had clambered up the canyon side, where they sat unsheltered and awaiting events. The very first downpour wetted every young man and woman to the bone and filled thin boots with water. The worst of it was that they had not yet eaten. They had brought up with them two burros laden with supplies, and two mule teams, which had dragged them up into the wooded elysium beside the tumbling creek of the canyon. When the storm gathered it was at a moment when the burros stood, still unloaded, and the mules attached to the two wagons still unhitched. They, the four-footed things, knew what the thunder and the darkness meant. They knew, somehow, that the upper canyon was no place for them, and, reasoning in the four-footed way, they exercised the limbs they had, obeying the orders of such

brains as they owned, and gathering themselves together for independent action, went down the canyon clatteringly in a bunch.

Foodless and scared, the picnickers huddled far up the little canyon's side and sat awed and watchful as the lightning flashed about them and the waters rose beneath them. The torrent of rain loosened the soil above, and they were so drenched in clay-colored water coming down, and sat so still beneath it, that they looked like cheap terra cotta images.

Suddenly the thunder ceased, the rainfall ended, and this particular slight area of Arizona was Arizona again. The power of the rain-maker was limited. Through four yellow miles of yellow muck, beside a temporarily yellow stream, waded for hours wearily a dreadful picnic party, seeking in disgust the town of Cougarville. They reached their separate homes somehow, and washed and went to bed.

In the Cougarville Screamer of the following morning appeared a graphic account of the great exploit of "Professor" Gray, of the Department of Agriculture, who on the preceding day had, after taking his force into the foothills and utilizing the means at his command, attained the greatest rainfall of the season. Of course it was to be regretted that a picnic including the élite of Cougarville was in progress beside the creek of the canyon alongside which Professor Gray operated, but scientists could not be expected to know anything of social

functions, and all was for the best. One of the mules and one of the burros had been recovered. It was a great day for Cougarville. "Now," concluded the account, "since the means for irrigation are assured, the valleys about our promising city will bloom eternally fresh, and no one doubts the location of the metropolis of the region."

As for Gray, he met Miss Fleming on the day succeeding, and if withering glances ever really withered anything, he would have been as a dry leaf. But he did not wither. He went East, and is now connected with the Pennsylvania Broad Gauge. Miss Fleming married Mr. Muggles, and I understand the store is doing only moderately well. What puzzles me is that after Gray's triumph up the canyon on this occasion, the United States Government should have abandoned the rain-making experiments. The facts related in this very brief account are respectfully submitted to the consideration of the Department of Agriculture.

WITHIN ONE LIFE'S SPAN

A RIVER flows through green prairies into a vast blue lake. There are log houses along the banks, and near the lake a more pretentious structure, also built of logs. Quaint as an old Dutch mill, with its overhanging second story, this fort of rude type answers its purpose well, for only Indians are likely to assail it, and Indians bring no artillery.

A summer morning comes, an August morning in the year 1812. There is war, and there have been disgraces and defeats and wavering counsels. To the soldiers in the fort has been given the advice of a weakling in peril, and it has had unhappy weight. About the fort are gathering a host of Indians, dark Pottowatomies, treacherous and sullen. Yet the fort is to be abandoned. The scanty garrison will venture forth with its women and its children.

To the south, along the lake, are reaches of yellow sand and a mile or more away are trees and scanty shrubbery. From the fort file slowly out the soldiers with their baggage-wagons, in which the weaker are bestowed. Among the young is a boy of eight—a waif, the orphan of a hunter.

Forest-bred, he is alert and in some things older than his years. He is old enough to have a sense of danger. From his covert in the wagon he watches all intently.

The few musicians play a funeral march, and the procession moves apprehensively, though it moves steadily, for there are brave men in the ranks, men who will not flinch, though they rage at the evil folly to which they have been driven. They do not doubt the issue, though they face it. They have not long to wait. The bushes which fringe the rising ground do not conceal the shifting enemy. The marching column huddles. There are sharp commands and the reports of muskets. The Indians are attacking. The massacre has begun!

Hampered, unsheltered, outnumbered by a vengeful host, the whites must die. The men die fighting, as men in such straits should. The Indians are close upon the women and children in the wagon. Into one of them, that which contains the hunter's child, leaps a savage, in whose beady eyes are all cruelty and ferocity. His tomahawk sinks into the brain of the nearest helpless one, and at the same instant, swift as an otter gliding into water, the boy is out and darting away among the bushes. Oddly enough he is unnoticed—a remnant of the soldiers are dying hardly—and he escapes to where the bushes are more dense. About a cottonwood tree in the distance appears greater covert. Around the tree has been part of the struggle, but

the ghastly tide has passed, and there are only dead men there. The boy is in mortal terror, but his instinct does not fail him. There is a heap of brush, the top of some tree felled by a storm, and beneath the mass he writhes and wriggles and is lost from view.

There is a rush of returning footsteps; there is a clamor of many Indian voices about the brush-heap, but the boy is undiscovered. The savages are not seeking him. They count all the whites as slain or captured, and are now but intent on plunder. Night falls. The child slips from his hiding place, and runs to the southward. Suddenly a dark figure rises in his path, and the grasp of a strong hand is upon his shoulder. He struggles frantically, but only for a moment. His own language is spoken. It is in the voice of a friendly Miami fleeing, like the boy, from the Pottowatomies. The Indian takes the boy by the hand, and hurries him to the westward, to the Mississippi.

It is the year 1835. One of a band of trappers venturing up the Missouri is a slender, quiet man, the deadliest shot in the party. Good trapper he is, but the fame he has earned among adventurers of his class is not from fur-getting. He is a lonely man, but a creature of action. He never seeks to avoid the Indian trails. Cautious and crafty he is, certainly, but he follows closely the westward drift of the red men, and when opportunity comes

he spares not at all. He is a hunter of Indians, vengeance personified. He is the boy who hid beneath the brush-heap; the memory of that awful day and night is ever with him, and he seeks blindly to make the equation just. To his single arm have fallen more savages than fell whites on the day of the massacre by the lake. Still he moves westward.

It is the year 1893 now. An old man occupies a farm in the remote Northwest. He has lost none of his faculties, nor nearly all his strength, though he is eighty-nine years of age. The long battle with the dangers of the wilds is done. The old man listens to the talk of those about him, of how a great nation is inviting all the nations of the world to take part in a monster jubilee, because of the quadri-centennial of a continent's discovery. He hears them tell of a place where this mighty demonstration will be made, and a torrent of memory sweeps him backward over eighty years. He thinks of one awful day and night. An irresistible longing to look again upon the regions he has not seen for more than three-quarters of a century, a wild desire to revisit the junction of the river and the great blue lake, and to wander where the sand-reaches and the cottonwood tree were, possesses him. And, resolute as ever, he acts upon the impulse which now becomes a plan.

An old man, as strangely placed as some old gray elk among a herd of buffalo, is hurried along

the swarming, roaring thoroughfares of a great city. He has found the river and the lake, but nothing else save pandemonium. He is seeking now the place where the cottonwood tree stood, though he scarcely hopes to find it. He asks what his course shall be, and is answered kindly. He finds his way to a broad thoroughfare bearing the blue lake's name, and is told to seek Eighteenth Street, and there walk toward the water. He does as he is directed, and—marvelous to him, now—he finds the Tree.

There it stands, the cottonwood of the massacre, with blunt white limbs outstretched and dead, as dead as those who were slaughtered at its base and whose very bones have long been dust. The old man walks about it as in a dream. He finds the spot where was the brush-heap beneath which he passed shuddering hours so long ago, and he stands there upon a modern pavement. The marble piles of rich men loom above him on each side. Where were the sand ridges cast up by the lake, rush by the burdened railroad trains. He cannot comprehend it—but there is more to come.

The old man has sought the oak-dotted prairie miles to the south. Surely, something, somewhere must be unchanged! He has attained the spot where the trees were densest. He is in a swirl of hosts. He looks upon vast, splendid structures, such as the world has never seen before. Through shining thoroughfares are surging the people of

all nations. And here was where the Miami Indian found the boy!

An old man is sitting again in his cabin in the far Northwest. He is wondering, wondering if it has been but a dream, his old-age journey. How could it be real? Surely there was once the fort where the river joined the lake, and there were the yellow sand-ridges, and the low, green prairie and the wilderness. He had seen them. They were there, familiar to the pioneers, the features of a landscape where was the outpost in the wilderness of the race which conquers. He knew there could be no mistake about it, that what he remembered was something real, for the river was in its ancient channel; though dark its waters, the lake was blue and vast as of old, and the tree with its stark branches was still the Tree. Those who had lived with him in his old age in the far Northwest had seemed never to doubt in him the retained possession of all his faculties, and he knew that he could not be mistaken as to the things that were. He had lived with them. How could such changes have come within the span of a single lifetime? Yet he had seen the new! How could it be? And the old man could not tell.

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